

Nick Clark says there's nothing good about calls to embrace patriotism >>Pages 14&15

Labour and the 'national interest'



Anti-racists take a surprise delivery to Fergus Wilson —curry >>Page 7

ACTIVISTS VISIT RACIST LANDLORD



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CROYDON ATTACK ON REFUGEE

RACE HATE FUELLED BY TORY LIES

by ALISTAIR FARROW in Croydon

A VICIOUS racist attack in Croydon, south London, has left a young refugee with a fractured skull, a fractured spine and a blood clot on his brain.

Police said victim Reker Ahmed, a 17 year old Kurdish-Iranian asylum seeker, was "very lucky not to have lost his life".

He has been scarred for life with severe injuries to his face, police said.

The attackers asked

Reker where he was from. When they found out that he was an asylum seeker they chased him, then kicked and punched him.

Those who beat Reker are guilty of a horrific crime.

But it is a crime motivated, manufactured and aided by politicians and the media.

It was fuelled by every racist lie pumped out to divide us.

It was boosted by every article that demonises refugees or claims they are to blame for

>>>turn to
page 3



Reker Ahmed



Theresa May

GIBRALTAR

Bluster shows the 'kind of people' the Tories are

A SUCCESSION of Tories have threatened to go to war to "defend" Gibraltar.

They were responding to the need for Gibraltar's relationship with the European Union to be reviewed as part of Brexit.

The frenzy over Gibraltar has led to yet more xenophobic propaganda.

>>Page 6

AUSTERITY



PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

Resist Tories' school cuts and benefit changes

THE FIGHT to stop cuts in schools is escalating with three strikes in London last week.

Funding changes will see schools in England losing £3 billion a year by 2020.

Meanwhile Tory tax and benefit changes will hit the poorest the hardest—and must be resisted too.

>>Pages 4&5

RAILWAYS

Strike over safety takes on vulture capitalist bosses

RMT UNION members on three rail networks were set for a coordinated strike this Saturday.

They are fighting attacks on safety. The attacks will make more cash for some of the wealthiest private equity funds in the world.

>>Pages 10&11,20



THE THINGS THEY SAY

'I do support a second referendum. Richard Branson says so, Tony Blair says so.'

Extremely wealthy hedge fund boss **Martin Sorrell** makes a case for Remain in the nominally left wing New Statesman magazine

'I can see no harm in reminding them what kind of people we are'

Excited Tory **Michael Howard** calls for war with Spain

'Britain's Navy is 'far weaker' than it was during the Falklands but could still 'cripple' Spain.'

Daily Telegraph headline writers go a bit weak at the prospect of Howard's war

'Now Nicola Sturgeon has gone further by showing off her toes'

The Daily Mail gets excited about seeing a politician's feet

'Fair to taxpayers'

Theresa May on what's good about her government's assault on benefits



Vermin in ermine expenses scam is still going strong

MULTIMILLIONAIRE peers are claiming up to £40,000 a year in expenses for attending the House of Lords while making little or no contributions to debates, committees or questions.

The rules allow members to claim up to £300 a day for "attendance".

The only requirement is that they show their faces in the chamber or a committee at some point while it is sitting.

Lord Paul, one of Britain's richest men, was suspended seven years ago for an expenses violation.

He received £40,800 last year despite making no contributions in the chamber or on committees.

The total annual claims for the period November 2015 to October last year added up to £19.1 million.



MONEY FOR nothing—the House of Lords

Lord Evans of Watford, a Labour peer and publishing firm boss, claimed £24,300 for 83 days' attendance.

But he made no contributions in debates or questions and voted on five bills.

Lord Carswell, a cross-bencher based in Northern

Ireland, claimed £7,800 for 29 days. But he did not vote or make any written or spoken contributions in the chamber.

He is chair of a house committee, but it conducted no business during the claim period.

Carswell also claimed £6,500 in travel expenses, including the airfare to and from Westminster of £551 for a single day's attendance.

Lord Hanningfield, a former Tory peer, was jailed in 2011 for false accounting relating to his expenses and later suspended.

Our analysis found he claimed £3,300 for 11 days of attendance in 2015-16 when he contributed to no votes and only one debate—on education in prisons.

On average, members of the Lords made 41 spoken or written contributions in the chamber and racked up 19 days of voting during the 2015-16 sittings.

Among peers who claimed £40,000 and above, the average level of engagement was 141 contributions in debates or questions and 63 votes.

THE DAILY Mail heralded a "2.4bn boost for our schools" on Monday of this week. It might sound good news to Troublemaker readers nervous about the scale of Tory cuts to school funding. Unfortunately it isn't a boost at all, as education secretary Justine Greening confirmed that none of the cash was new money. Some of it will be squandered on expanding nine grammar schools.

Taxi for Greening!

GOVERNMENT scheme Help-to-Buy offers a loan, guaranteed by the state, of 20 percent of a property's value—rising to 40 percent in London. But figures show almost 4,000 applicants earning more than £100,000 a year have used it. And more than half said they didn't need the loan to buy a house.

Bankers covered up other bankers' fraud

EXECUTIVES AT one of Britain's biggest banks "concealed" an estimated £1 billion fraud for nine years, according to a secret report.

The scam at Halifax Bank of Scotland (HBOS), was suppressed at the height of the financial crisis in 2008.

That's according to a report by a senior employee at Lloyds, which merged with HBOS.

Leaked internal emails reveal that senior executives knew at the time that bankers at its branch in Reading had committed a "fraud" but were anxious

"not to disclose" the affair.

Lloyds has claimed that it "could not determine" whether anything criminal had occurred until the trial that led to the jailing in February of two of its former bankers and four consultants.

The fraud began in 2003 when Lynden Scourfield, a senior HBOS banker, forced firms that needed to borrow money to use a consultancy firm led by his associate, David Mills.

The cash was siphoned off in fees by Mills and three others, including his wife.



Spooks looking to keep internal exile

MI5 WANTS to extend draconian curbs on three terrorism suspects.

The three men remain free, but were placed under anti-terrorism controls last summer.

The measures, known as TPIMs (terrorism prevention and investigation measures) were a wheeze brought in by Theresa May.

The men have been relocated outside London, barred from meeting certain people and banned from using the internet.

At least one is not allowed to withdraw more

than £75 a week and has had his passport cancelled.

Lawyers for the three men, who are among seven people subject to TPIMs, are seeking to challenge the orders.

The three men, who cannot be named for legal reasons, have been linked by the spooks to the banned Al-Muhajiroun group.

Their lawyers argue that this is and has had a detrimental impact on the men's young families.

The three men deny any involvement in terrorism.



Champagne pints for all

SIMON HEFFER is the best British journalism has to offer. He wrote an incoherent book about grammar and got Boris Johnson to take the blame when he labelled Liverpool people for "an excessive predilection for welfarism".

Heffer is excited about leaving the European Union, but still angry.

He wrote, "We have been forced on to the Celsius temperature scale, which is less precise than Fahrenheit; we can't buy groceries in pounds and ounces, or petrol in gallons, or wallpaper in yards, even though these measurements are second nature to most of us."

"Laws criminalising imperial measures must be repealed. Pol Roger has announced that it will once more sell champagne in Churchill's favourite pint measure: British companies must now follow where a French one has led."

FIGURE IT OUT

1,051

Children police have drawn Tasers on or fired Tasers at in 2014 and 2015

12

The age of the youngest child Tasered

9

The age of the youngest child threatened with a Taser

185

The Met recorded the highest frequency for using Tasers on children

Poor spending to stay in debt

THE poorest households are spending £92 a month more than they earn, figures suggest.

The lowest-earning fifth of homes had an average £178 a week income in February.

But after tax, bills and living costs they were in the red.

Their spending power has fallen by 18 percent since last year.

By contrast the richest 20 percent had a weekly income of £1,821 and £688 left over, 2 percent more than a year ago.

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Horror and hypocrisy as refugee viciously beaten

>>continued from page 1

the problems we face.

The Tories and the editors of papers such as the Daily Mail and the Sun should be in the dock alongside those who turned their words into action.

The attack took place in Shrublands Avenue, next to a bus stop opposite the Goat pub, last Friday night.

Local people were shocked. Lisa, whose house overlooks the bus stop, told Socialist Worker, "We've lived here for three years but there's never been anything like this."

Shop workers spoke of how the attack has shaken people in the area.

"Seventeen years ago things were a lot different around here, but things have changed so it's come as a shock to everyone," Olwyn told Socialist Worker.

Racist

Purbita, who also lives in the area, said, "We don't have any problems, the area is generally ok. I've never heard of a racist attack around here and I've lived here for over ten years."

However, this is not the first racist attack in the area. In July 1992 Ruhullah Aramesh, an Afghan refugee living close to where last week's attacks took place, was beaten to death.

His killers were a group of whites wielding iron bars and lumps of wood and shouting racist abuse.

Croydon has a history of the Nazi British National Party trying to establish a base.

Nazi groups have repeatedly held aggressive demonstrations outside Croydon's immigration centre where all new asylum seekers have



ON THE Stand Up To Racism vigil in Croydon last Sunday

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN



The bus stop where the attack took place

to present themselves. But years of anti-fascist organising have held them in check.

Given the atmosphere of racism, it was disgraceful that detective superintendent Jane Corrigan said on

Monday it was a "random attack". "I genuinely don't think people have gone out that night with the intention to commit this horrific attack," she said.

Truth

Well before anyone could know the full truth of the incident, she went on, "You've got a really difficult mix of youth, the time of night, alcohol, and it only takes one person to say something that could spark off something massive."

But this is not just about distorted individuals.

It is now necessary to step up anti-racist campaigning.

Anti-racists held a vigil in Croydon on Sunday, called by Stand Up To Racism (SUTR). Brian Richardson

from SUTR told the vigil, "This attack has taken place in the context of a pattern of increasing racism."

"It has taken place in the context of millions of people fleeing wars. Our government is responsible for many of those wars."

SUTR plans a larger demonstration this Saturday. SUTR co-convenor Weyman Bennett said, "This appalling attack is directly the result of the vicious racism created by politicians and right wing groups."

"Everyone should stand against the demonisation of refugees and all forms of racism."

On other pages...

Nazis need the cops' help to march in central London >>Page 18

White suspects on racially aggravated assault charge

A TOTAL of 13 people had been charged in the investigation as Socialist Worker went to press.

Five people appeared in court on Monday accused of violent disorder in connection with Reker's case.

Daryl Davis, Danyelle Davis, Barry Potts, George Walder, and Jack Walder were charged after being accused

of violent disorder. George Walder was additionally charged with racially aggravated grievous bodily harm.

Police later confirmed Kyran Evans and a 17 year old woman had also been charged over the attack.

Another six people were charged on Tuesday with violent disorder, two of them also with racially

aggravated grievous bodily harm.

There was some speculation immediately after the attack that the assailants were black.

But it is clear that all, or nearly all, of those charged by Tuesday lunchtime are white.

What's your story?

Email with your ideas reports@socialistworker.co.uk

SOLIDARITY

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Stand Up To Racism

More at bit.ly/2o1PwUE

Crocodile tears from the Tories

SENIOR TORIES condemning the Croydon attack are shameless hypocrites.

Local MP Gavin Barwell, Tory minister for housing and planning, called the attackers "cowardly and despicable scum" and even praised graffiti saying "refugees welcome".

He voted last year against the Dubs Amendment to allow young unaccompanied refugees into Britain.

Theresa May called it "an absolutely abominable attack". But in a TV interview days earlier she pandered to anti-immigrant racism.

She said the government was "taking control of our borders" because "obviously we want to see net migration coming down".

Selective reporting

IMAM SULIMAN Gani from South Croydon mosque told Socialist Worker the media reports attacks differently depending on the ethnicity or religion of the perpetrators.

"When an attack happens like that on Friday it's portrayed in the media as the work of individuals and young thugs," he said.

"When MP Jo Cox was murdered, her killer Thomas Mair was described as a troubled individual when he had links to the fascist Britain First."

"But if the attacker happens to be Muslim we're expected to apologise."

"We're pressured to issue press releases saying we condemn it, but it had nothing to do with us."

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SOCIALIST
CAN THE LEFT SHAPE BREXIT?

IN THIS WEEK

1982

Task force sets sail for Falklands

BRITAIN'S NAVY sent ships to the Falklands Islands on 5 April.

Some 649 Argentine sailors and soldiers were killed in this undeclared war over a colony.

So were 255 British troops and three islanders.



Fightback is well under way against school cuts

As Tories' school budget cuts provoke resistance—coordinate to make them unworkable, argues **Sadie Robinson**

THE FIGHT to stop cuts in schools is escalating. Three groups of teachers struck in London last week against funding cuts (see page 19).

More NUT union members in other schools are balloting for strikes against cuts.

And parents are continuing to organise against the Tories' so called fair funding formula, which will see schools in England losing £3 billion a year by 2020.

More than 70 people joined a protest in Chesterfield last Saturday, organised by Derbyshire Schools Say No to Education Cuts.

Protester James Eaden said, "We distributed 2,500 flyers and hundreds signed petitions. It was an important start to what will need to be a county-wide campaign to save our schools."

Threatened

About 250 had protested in Chester city centre the previous Saturday.

NUT union divisional secretary Greg Foster said the cuts threatened "a shorter week for children, fewer teachers, fewer support staff and fewer subject choices".

"It is simply not fair to make children suffer for the government's inability to balance the budget," he said.

BACK STORY

Tory school budget cuts are disguised behind a new funding formula

●The cuts and moves to privatise the education system are part of a much bigger agenda to turn schools into exam factories

●The Tories set children up to fail so these "failures" can be used to attack schools—and push more privatisation

●For details of the cuts in your area, and campaigning details go to schoolcuts.org.uk

Meetings and protests are taking place across England as parents get organised. Parent Victoria set up a campaign group in Cheshire East.

"Teachers' morale is getting lower every year," she told Socialist Worker. "People are saying we can't cut any more."

"The funding formula is a smokescreen for cuts. The more noise we make about this, the better."

Parent Huw Williams was at a meeting in Bristol on Thursday of last week. "Around 65 parents and school staff met in the Lockleaze/



TEACHERS ON strike in Lewisham, south east London, last week (see page 19)

PICTURES: GUY SMALLMAN

Ashley Down area of Bristol," he told Socialist Worker.

"Parents signed up to be school contacts for the campaign. We agreed to circulate petitions directed at the local MP, and education minister Justine Greening."

Activists plan to organise a march in the city. And parents in nearby South Gloucestershire were set to meet on Thursday of this week.

Huw explained that the meeting was organised around five junior schools and one secondary school.

"It is clear we can build a movement which has the potential to mobilise huge numbers of people," he said. As another Bristol parent put it, "This is a fight we can win and this is just the start."

Some Labour councillors and MPs have backed local campaigns. This is welcome. Labour councillor Nicole

Meardon addressed the rally in Chester along with Chester MP Chris Matheson. Labour councillor Estelle Tincknell spoke at the Bristol meeting.

But Labour councils are among those pushing vicious cuts, including in Lewisham and Hackney in London where the school strikes took place last week. The party should stand up to the Tories' assault on schools, not go along with it.

The Tories are under pressure over their funding formula. It's clear that there is widespread support for resistance to it. School unions should coordinate strikes to make the cuts unworkable.



Fighting the cuts

There are no guarantees Sats tests will go

THE GOVERNMENT is considering scrapping hated Sats tests for six and seven year olds. This follows anger at the tests—and a parent boycott of them last year.

Children and parents gathered outside the Department for Education (DfE) in central London chanting, "No more Sats," and, "Let kids be kids."

But the Tories have made no definite promise to get rid of the tests—and if they do go, it won't be until the early 2020s.

Damaging

Meanwhile they remain committed to upholding other damaging tests which have nothing to do with education.

Last year nearly half of 11 year olds "failed" Sats tests. The Tories set children up to fail so these

"failures" can be used to attack schools—and push more privatisation.

The NUT union said the consultation was "a recognition that our children deserve something better" but that the government is also proposing "changes for the worse for younger age groups".

The DfE wants baseline testing for early years children. It wants to

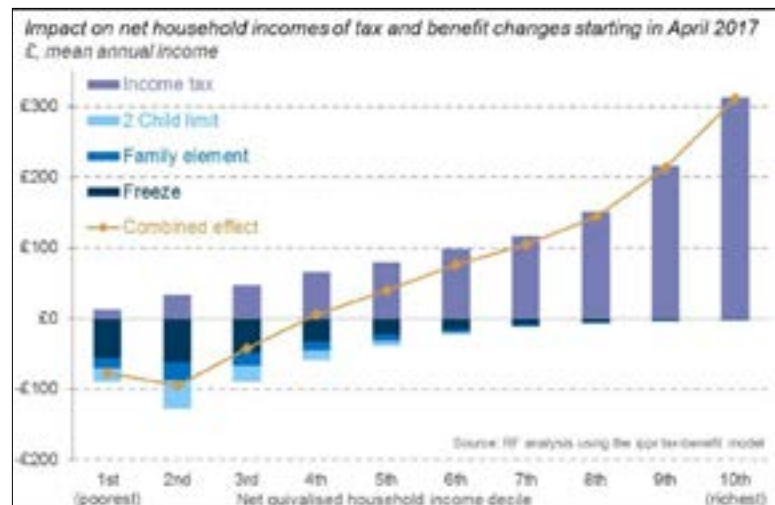
measure children at five years old so that teachers can then be judged on their "performance" in subsequent years.

This is part of an agenda to attack teachers, and drive down pay and conditions in education.

PICTURE: SIMON MURCH



WELFARE



Tory tax and benefit cuts hit the poorest hardest

by ELEANOR CLAXTON-MAYER

THE TORIES' tax and benefit changes from April will hit the poorest the hardest.

Despite claims of her government being "fairer" it's clear that prime minister Theresa May's administration is as vicious and nasty as its predecessors.

Four fifths of the gains from income tax cuts are going to the richest while the poorest third are to bear the brunt of two thirds of the benefit cuts and could lose £2,000 a year.

The threshold for paying income tax has risen to £11,500, giving a tax cut to those earning more than £11,100.

The higher rate threshold has also risen to £45,000.

Offset

These tax cuts combined are worth £2 billion but this is offset by slashing benefits.

All working age benefits and tax credits will be frozen.

The four-year freeze started last year but many will feel the bite of it now from the rise in inflation.

This is saving the government £2.7 billion more than it anticipated from the policy over the four

years. Without the freeze, benefits would have risen by 1 percent this year, but instead the government is cutting £800 million.

On top of this inflation is predicted to rise to 3 percent this year, increasing financial pressure on people relying on benefits.

Tip

But it's just the tip of the iceberg.

If your first child is born after 6 April you will be denied the family element of tax credits and universal credit (UC).

This is worth £545 per year and affects 270,000 families.

If you have two or more children, any more you have after 6 April will not get tax credit support.

This will hit hundreds of thousands of families with a loss of £2,780 a year.

These cuts come in the wake of attacks on Personal Independence Payments and Employment Support Allowance along with housing support.

The cuts to benefits are pushing thousands into poverty and putting many disabled people's lives in danger.

The tax cuts are benefiting those who are for the most part unaffected by benefit changes.

Once again the government is cutting support for the poorest in society. This needs to be challenged and the cuts must be resisted.



Campaigners outside parliament last week (see page 18)

Socialist Worker WHAT WE THINK

RESIST RACIST VIOLENCE WITH A MASS MOVEMENT

EVERYONE SAYS they condemn the attack on asylum seeker Reker Ahmed in Croydon, south London, last week.

Most ordinary people are genuinely horrified by what happened—but much of the media's reaction is disgustingly hypocritical.

Reker came to Britain as an unaccompanied minor a few months ago. He may well have been one of those who newspapers such as the Daily Mail condemned for "pretending to be children" to get into Britain.

Denouncing

Such papers hardly let a day pass without denouncing refugees as alien, subhuman and dangerous.

They campaign to shut out the refugees who gather in Calais or risk their lives in flimsy boats to reach Europe.

They suggest that among them are rapists and terrorists determined to murder us.

Having provided the perfect script for racist attacks, the newspapers then throw up their hands in horror when they happen.

This attack—and the stream of

racism from the top—means we must redouble our efforts to build Stand Up To Racism as a mass movement.

Everyone can be part of it, and build it in workplaces, schools, colleges and localities.

Everyone can build the demonstration against US president Donald Trump when he comes to Britain.

We also need to work harder to defeat the lies that are used against migrants. Croydon Central Tory MP Gavin Barwell branded Reker's attackers as "scum".

But in 2014 Barwell was trying to link high unemployment to migration saying, "More Croydon residents would have jobs if you'd

“
Having provided the script for race hate attacks, the papers throw up their hands

had a better immigration policy like controls on new European Union members."

That's the sort of lie that we need to take on wherever it comes from. And we need to confront state racism.

Deport

Just last week disabled Lovelyn Edobor was forced into a waist restraint belt and dragged along "like a goat" when the Home Office tried to deport her.

She would then have been deported were it not for activists blocking a deportation flight—for which 17 of them were arrested.

We need to turn people's anger away from migrants and Muslims and towards the real culprits for their problems—the Tories, the bosses and capitalism.

That won't be done just by words. It requires more protests and strikes over the attacks on wages, benefits, our schools, the NHS and poor housing.

It means fighting our rulers and the system that produces austerity, racism and war.

Unity in action can beat the attempts to divide us which have such poisonous results—as we saw in Croydon.

TIME TO BREAK UP BRITAIN

SOME SECTIONS of the press seemed astonished at the latest predictions of Scottish Labour's collapse in next month's local council elections.

They insinuated that Jeremy Corbyn is to blame, rather than the Blairites who bombed and privatised their way through the 2000s.

But after the Scottish National Party (SNP)'s recent gains at Labour's expense, seeing it prise the last few councils out of Labour's once-dominant grip

will not be a shock. Yet it will be historic.

Labour disastrously lined up with the Tories in the 2014 independence referendum. Since then working class people have obliterated it in the polls.

Many supported Scottish independence as a rejection of austerity, racism and war—and Labour's unionist stance was just the final straw.

The SNP has reaped the rewards by talking left, but it can't be relied on to launch a second

referendum, let alone win it.

The SNP government last week started the process for a vote after a majority of the Scottish parliament backed it.

A majority of Scots think that the Scottish parliament, not the British one, should decide.

Those who were inspired by the left wing arguments of the Yes movement in 2014 need to mobilise that energy again.

A mass movement is needed to take the debate out of the hands of the politicians.

International Socialism 154

Alex Callinicos

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Megan Trudell

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ANALYSIS

ALEX CALLINICOS



Brexit begins—but is it business as usual?

THE BREXIT debate is being conducted by two wings of the British political and media elites. Both claim that Britain leaving the European Union (EU) will lead to profound changes—for the worse, according to the Remainers, for the better according to the Tory and Ukipp Brexiteers.

Neither group is particularly representative of big business in Britain. The economic core of the ruling class didn't want Britain to leave and so is pressing for Brexit to involve as little change as possible. It's quite possible that this may be what actually happens.

What is becoming clear is how boxed in Britain is in the negotiations over the terms of Brexit.

As numerous commentators have pointed out, because triggering article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty sets a two-year clock running for Britain's departure, the rest of the EU can just sit tight.

Britain needs a deal, above all economically, to preserve the trade and financial links with the EU that are crucial to British capitalism. So the rest of the EU can drag the talks out to screw the most out of Britain.

So Donald Tusk, president of the European Council, has issued draft negotiating guidelines. These make "sufficient progress" on the terms of British withdrawal—above all, how much money Britain will have to cough up—a precondition for talks on trade starting.

Spain succeeded in tacking onto the guidelines another precondition tying a trade deal to an agreement over Gibraltar. This is another symptom of Britain's vulnerability.

What's interesting is how far the stances of Theresa May and her Brexit secretary David Davis have softened.

The talk of "no deal is better than a bad deal" seems to have gone.

And there are hints of how the government is willing to pay for trade access and even accept some temporary continuing role for the European Court of Justice.

Adjusting

This apparent shift probably reflects two factors. First, May and Co understand how boxed in they are and are adjusting accordingly. The second is pressure from big business.

The "Great Repeal Bill" that Davis previewed in the House of Commons last week is badly misnamed, since it will make the existing body of EU regulations the default position for a post-Brexit Britain.

According to the Financial Times newspaper, "Britain's biggest companies have warned against slashing the estimated 19,000 EU rules that the repeal bill will import into UK law when Brexit happens."

"The CBI business lobby group said in a report last year that while many sectors, including chemicals, plastics, food and drink, and financial services, disliked some EU rules, there was no desire to get rid of them. 'The view emerging in every sector is that these costs are largely sunk for current regulation and seamless access to EU markets is a price worth paying for,' the report said."

The one area where May has strongly committed the Tories to change is ending free movement for EU migrant workers. But even here, when interviewed by Andrew Neil last week, she avoided saying immigration would be "significantly lower" after Brexit.

This suggests that the prospect after Brexit will be neither the post-apocalyptic impoverished Little England predicted by Remainers nor the free trade "global Britain" promised by May and the Brexiteers.

This doesn't mean there are no dangers. One is that, subject to the constraints I've described, the Tories and the bosses will try to use Brexit to worsen the rights and conditions of workers. This is something that trade unionists and socialists need to be vigilant against.

Secondly, there is the factor of sheer unpredictability.

On Sunday ex-Tory leader Michael Howard invoked the shades of Margaret Thatcher and the Falklands War over Gibraltar. I doubt there's a serious appetite in Whitehall and Westminster for restaging the War of the Spanish Succession of 1701-1714. But Donald Trump's advent to the White House makes one wary of ruling anything out.

The decay of neoliberal capitalism is breeding all kinds of monsters.

MICHAEL HOWARD (centre) has warned that Theresa May (right) could "show the same resolve" as Thatcher

Absurd bluster reveals what 'kind of people' the Tories are

by CHARLIE KIMBER

A SUCCESSION of Tories have threatened to go to war to "defend" Gibraltar, the British possession on the southern tip of the Spanish state.

Defence secretary Michael Fallon said Britain would go "all the way" to keep Gibraltar.

Foreign secretary Boris Johnson said the British government's support for Gibraltar will remain "implacable and rock-like".

On the Andrew Marr show former Conservative leader Lord Michael Howard referenced Margaret Thatcher's Falklands War.

He said, "Thirty five years ago another woman prime minister sent a task-force to defend the freedom of another small group of British people against another Spanish-speaking country."

Resolve

"And I am absolutely certain our current prime minister will show the same resolve in Gibraltar."

Later the same day he said he wasn't supporting war but "I can see no harm in reminding the Spanish what kind of people we are".

The Tories were responding to the need for Gibraltar's relationship with the European Union (EU) to be

reviewed as part of Brexit. A clause in the EU's response to the British decision to invoke Article 50 says Gibraltar could be excluded from trade deals if Spain does not agree the territory's status.

On one level the sabre-rattling is absurd.

Perhaps as retaliation, the Spanish Tory government said it would not veto an attempt by an independent Scotland to join the EU.

This is a boost to the Scottish National Party's push for a second referendum.

The frenzy over Gibraltar



The tax haven of Gibraltar

leads to yet more xenophobic propaganda.

Writing in the Sun newspaper, Kelvin MacKenzie denounced the Spanish as "donkey rogers" and called for the 125,000 Spanish people working in Britain to be expelled.

Even Labour's shadow Brexit secretary, Keir Starmer, said it was important that "the sovereignty of Gibraltar is protected".

Seized

Gibraltar is under British rule as it was seized as part of a war in the 18th century.

In 1704 a fleet of English and Dutch ships captured the town during the War of the Spanish Succession and it was granted to Britain under the Treaty of Utrecht.

On seven separate occasions between 1713 and 1728 the British government proposed to give back the territory, but nationalist MPs blocked the move.

It was useful as a naval base during the wars of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Today it is an important tax haven. Many internet companies are based there so they pay no tax.

The Panama Papers, the documents that exposed massive tax evasion by companies and politicians, showed Gibraltar played a leading role for the rich.

Britain has absolutely no right to govern Gibraltar.

Don't mention the war

THERESA MAY headed off this week to one of Britain's biggest allies in the Middle East—Saudi Arabia.

May said she hoped the trip would "herald a further intensification in relations between our countries".

Saudi Arabia is British firms' largest defence export market.

It's responsible for an estimated 58 percent of orders

between 2006 and 2015. Saudi Arabia plays an important military role for Britain and the US.

May won't highlight the murderous Saudi war in Yemen. It has killed 12,000 civilians, displaced three million and led to a famine affecting seven million people.

Nor will May denounce the vile regime which saw 150 people executed last year.



Victims of Saudi war on Yemen

It's a special delivery for racist Kent landlord...

...but millionaire Fergus Wilson doesn't like curry—or Asian people. Anti-racists paid him a visit this week

ANTI-RACIST activists travelled to Kent on Monday to deliver curries to racist landlord Fergus Wilson. He provoked outrage last week when an email he sent to a letting agent was leaked to the press.

It detailed groups of people he didn't want his homes to be let to. "No coloured people because of the curry smell at the end of the tenancy," it said.

Wilson lives with his partner Judith at Boughton Lodge on Peen Lane, Boughton Monchelsea. They are protected by guard dogs, wire fences and CCTV cameras.

Activists Saba, Antony and Naima travelled there to challenge Wilson over his racist views.

"He owns 1,000 homes," said Saba. "That's 1,000 families who have to live with the fear of being evicted on a whim."

"Some people want to take us back to the times when landlords hung signs in their windows saying 'no blacks, no dogs, no Irish'."

Wilson tried to justify his racism in an interview last week. "It's a problem with certain types of coloured people—those who consume curry," he helpfully explained. "It sticks to the carpet."

Mask

Saba said, "We're here to deliver him curry. We hope the smell sticks. But it is unlikely to mask the smell of bigotry."

Wilson has issues with other people too.

He has previously refused to take on housing benefit claimants as tenants, and evicted 200 of them.

He has also said he won't let homes to victims of domestic abuse because their abusers might damage his property.

Wilson claimed in January, "There's nothing about not taking Chinese people, black people, homosexual



Fergus Wilson

PICTURE: PA

Watch online



● See Saba, Antony and Naima deliver curry to the racist landlord at bit.ly/2xxt0se

people. As long as they can pay the money I don't care what colour they are.

"If ever a person came in wearing pink socks and defaulted on rent, and it became a regular problem, then we would stop renting to people who wear pink socks."

In 2014 he was convicted of assault. He has also been convicted for offences including dangerous driving.

Because of his assault conviction he was blocked from standing in the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner elections in 2015.

Before he was forced to pull out, his pledges included "a hotline to report illegal immigrants".

The Wilsons tried to take a gas engineer to court after he declared one of their properties "at risk" because it was unsafe.

Unfortunately, the activists missed out on the pleasure of meeting Wilson because he didn't answer the door.

All they could do was post the food into his letter box along with a note reading, "We're sorry we missed you. We hope you enjoy Britain's favourite food—curry."



UNIMPRESSED—ACTIVISTS Antony, Saba and Naima at Wilson's business address

PICTURE: SOCIALIST WORKER

DARCUS HOWE, 1943–2017

Darcus Howe (with megaphone) organises anti-fascists at the Battle of Lewisham in 1977

DARCUS HOWE, the anti-racist, writer and broadcaster, died last Saturday.

He fought against racism and injustice for decades and was an irrepressible agitator.

He played an important role in stopping the National Front in the streets of Lewisham in 1977.

He once said, "The Metropolitan police is the most

dangerous institution in Britain."

Speaking at a memorial event for David Widgery, a leading figure in the Anti Nazi League, Darcus Howe described the experience of the five children he had fathered in Britain.

The first four had grown up angry, fighting forever against racism all around them.

The fifth child, he said, had

grown up "black and at ease". Darcus Howe attributed her "space" to the Anti Nazi League.

● Appreciation by Brian Richardson on the Stand Up To Racism website at bit.ly/2o5cYAI

● Interview with Socialist Worker on the 2011 riots at bit.ly/2owP4i5



Corruption crisis could bring down president

Protests in South Africa have rocked the state and could topple the president, writes **Charlie Kimber**

SOUTH AFRICA is in a deep political crisis that could force out president Jacob Zuma.

Zuma sacked half his cabinet last week, including the finance minister Pravin Gordhan. Gordhan had said a secret intelligence report had shown Zuma was plotting with the country's enemies, but nobody really believes that.

The crisis is partly about Zuma's attempts to stop investigations into his corruption. In particular, he does not want his dealings with the ultra-rich Gupta family revealed.

Zuma's move has crystallised many different strands of opposition against him—from socialists and trade unions but also from pro-corporate elements.

Strikes

At the start of this week people calling for Zuma's removal were organising protests, sit-ins and discussing strikes.

Gordhan, a veteran of the fight against apartheid, said it was time for South Africans to revive the spirit of that struggle.

The country's deputy president Cyril Ramaphosa denounced Zuma's sackings as "unacceptable".

The South African Communist Party, which is part of the ruling African National Congress (ANC) government, said, "We have reached a decisive moment. In the view of the party leadership, Zuma must now resign."

"It is a struggle against a network

BACK STORY

South Africa's current crisis began after president Jacob Zuma sacked some ministers, but it has deeper roots

- The promises made after apartheid have not been kept
- Society is deeply unequal thanks to political compromises
- Zuma's corruption has fuelled the anger of the movement

of patronage in defence of our hard-won democratic sovereignty. Let us roll back corporate capture of the state."

The CEO Initiative, a coalition of top business leaders, said it was "gravely concerned and disappointed" by Zuma.

It is crucial that the anti-Zuma movement is militant and dominated by the left. It must not be held back because of a wish to keep the right on board.

This is not just about an individual. It is about the whole trajectory of South Africa since the end of apartheid in 1994.

Capitalist

The newly-formed South African Federation of Trade Unions, which has broken links with the ANC, said, "The ANC government embraced the worst kind of free-market capitalist fundamentalism."

"This arose from the negotiated settlement which led to the democratic breakthrough of 1994 but which also guaranteed the continuation of monopoly, white-owned capitalism."

"As a result we have become the most unequal society in the world with one of the worst levels of unemployment and 14 million facing hunger."

"This is at the heart of the ANC crisis, made even worse by the domination of the Zuma/Gupta faction which is hell-bent on creating the worst possible type of corrupt and unaccountable capitalism."

PROTESTS ARE being organised across South Africa—and strikes could follow

Anti-racist protests and riots in Paris

by **DAVE SEWELL**

A NEW round of protests against police violence have broken out in Paris after cops shot Liu Shaoyao, a Chinese man, at the door of his home on 26 March.

Cops say Shaoyao attacked them with scissors. His family said this was a lie, and that he had scissors in his hands from preparing fish.

A series of protests led by Chinese immigrants broke out last week in Paris, from small-scale riots outside a police station to a mass rally in a central Paris square.

French newspapers smeared them as manipulated by the "Chinese mafia" or even the Chinese state. But as campaigner Sacha Lin-Jung told the crowd at

Protesters in Paris

a rally on Sunday, "We want the truth, to have justice in dignity".

This follows the high-profile rape by police of Theo Luhaka, a young black man, and the trial of an officer who killed French-Moroccan Amine Bentounsi.

Chinese immigrants in eastern Paris face frequent violence, yet

have previously been distant from the anti-racist struggles of other groups.

Last year after Zhang Chaolin was violently mugged and killed, Chinese migrants even marched demanding more policing.

Shaoyao's tragic death could be the catalyst for more united struggles. It comes against the backdrop of a presidential election where fascist Marine Le Pen is close to topping the polls.

But around 2,000 people marched in protest against her speaking in the city of Bordeaux on Sunday, to "not let fascism take hold".

These protests—as well as a late surge in support for radical left candidate Jean-Luc Melenchon—show that the triumph of the right is not inevitable in France.

Irish transport workers pull brakes on pay cut

BUS WORKERS picketed out transport hubs in Ireland last Friday. They shut down the transport network.

Some 2,600 workers for the Bus Eireann firm have been striking for over a week in a dispute over threatened 30 percent pay cuts.

The workers escalated the action last Friday. The dispute spread to Irish Rail and Dublin Bus services during the morning rush hour, with secondary pickets bringing out

other transport workers.

The unannounced secondary pickets forced the cancellation of almost all commuter trains in Dublin and many Intercity trains nationwide. Dublin Bus was picketed out.

Transport minister Shane Ross complained the action was "not part of the fair conduct of strikes".

People Before Profit TD Brid Smith said the stoppages "signal that workers will no longer accept

attacks on their living standards".

She said, "I urge workers to keep up the pickets until they secure their rights."

"We welcome the fact that the strike was escalated, and that people feel empowered and strong enough to say we're going to close down the capital because you're not listening to us."

The strike could escalate further—Bus Eireann school bus drivers are also to be balloted.

Jacob Zuma's days could be numbered

Stop the wreckers

I READ with interest your article on the One Housing tenants campaigning in London (background check, 29 March).

Opposition to redevelopment of council schemes or estates is important in order to stop attacks on council housing, social cleansing of the poor and land grabs.

We must also challenge the hated council tax—a state penalty on the poor—and the privatisation policies of the Tories.

Ayesha Saleem
Edinburgh

Principality of principle

AN IMPORTANT principle is at stake for socialists in the debate about Welsh language provision in schools (Letters, 1 March, 15 March and 21 March).

Do we side with the politicians who prey on fear while making cuts, such as Powys council which recently closed secondary Welsh provision in Brecon?

Or do we oppose all cuts and insist on a child's right to a fully resourced local school which teaches in the language appropriate to their needs?

The cuts being passed on by the Welsh government will mean more of these divisive battles to come.

The only model that leads to full bilingualism is where Welsh is the primary medium of teaching. A “dual stream” model is a failure, which is why it's being phased out.

Richard Morse
Cwmbran



ILLUSTRATION: TIM SANDERS

NHS boss is snatching food from the poor and the sick

THE DECISION to remove gluten free products from prescription will once again hit thousands of poor people in the wallet and their health.

A strict gluten free diet is currently the only way for sufferers of coeliac disease, such as myself, to be treated. Such diets are much more expensive than “normal diets” as they involve specialist ingredients that are not made from wheat.

Coeliac disease is a long term health condition.

If left untreated, it can lead to serious health complications, such as osteoporosis, fertility problems and in rare cases, small bowel cancer.

Currently people who are on benefits can receive certain foods on prescription, which can help with the increase in costs of being on a gluten free diet.

For instance, on a weight for weight basis, a gluten free loaf of bread can be seven times more expensive than the standard alternative.

In an interview with the Daily Mail newspaper Simon Stevens, the chief executive of NHS England said that £22 million was being spent on food that was readily available in Morrisons, Lidl or Tesco. But diets like this are not trendy fads, they are a necessity for around 1 percent of the population.

Those who cannot afford them

risk losing their prescription foods and will suffer immediate ill health and increased risks of fatal diseases.

The Tories know that these cuts to the NHS will hit the poorest—but the savings are minimal.

The total annual bill for gluten free food to the NHS is £22 million, which might be compared to the £17 million cost of a single Trident nuclear missile.

The NHS is in crisis as a result of government policies.

It won't be fixed by taking away treatments from the vulnerable, but by reversing the cuts and privatisation.

Martin Empson
Manchester

Toxic Trump will mean more deadly emissions

DONALD TRUMP is a real threat to the planet.

He is already undoing Barack Obama's limited reforms. Last week he scrapped the Clean Power Plan to replace coal power plants with renewables. He has approved the Keystone XL pipeline, overturning a decision to cancel it made after years of campaigning.

Trump has appointed climate sceptics such as Scott Pruitt to the cabinet. His secretary of state is former ExxonMobil CEO Rex Tillerson. His election

gives confidence to all those who want to put profit before the planet—including Theresa May.

Her government is pressing ahead with fracking and airport expansion and cutting subsidies for renewables.

The Campaign against Climate Change has called a protest in central London on Saturday 29 April, in solidarity with the People's Climate March in the US.

Camilla Royle
East London

Go to campaigncc.org

Anti-racists can't dismiss Leave voters

WE CAMPAIGNED last week with petitions to defend European Union (EU) migrants' rights.

An older worker hesitated before signing the petition. Then he said, “listen, son” and told me that he had voted to Leave but that he wanted to keep free movement.

He said that he hated racism and didn't want anyone to be deported.

He said that we had got the NHS and the welfare state as well as a faster growing economy when we weren't part of the Common Market that

Patronising? March for Europe

later became the EU.

I think he hesitated because he assumed he was in for another lecture about how stupid he was for voting Leave.

He was pleasantly surprised when I said I

was for leaving and that the anti-racist movement shouldn't oppose it.

There's a widespread argument that says the anti-racist movement needs to be pro-EU.

I think it's divisive and it silences many working class people who voted Leave. It smacks of a middle class patronising tone towards working class grievances.

However people voted in the referendum they can unite now against racism.

Tim Knight-Hughes
Norwich

Just a thought...

State of the union branch

I RECEIVED a letter from my Unite Community union branch last week, saying it had decided to back incumbent Len McCluskey in Unite's general secretary election.

I was amazed. This was the first time in three years I have been told of the branch's existence. I had no notification of the meeting to discuss what candidate to back and the letter had no local contact details.

Maybe it was a meeting in a smoke filled room behind a closed door? I will never know.

John Curtis
Ipswich

You're wrong about Syria

YOUR misleading article on Syria (Socialist Worker, 29 March) ignores the Kurdish and Arab offensive against Isis. It misunderstands the propaganda of the Turkish-sponsored Syrian National Coalition (SNC).

The SNC is upset because the Syrian Democratic Forces rightly sidelined it in the Raqqa operation.

I'm surprised Socialist Worker is regurgitating Turkish misinformation.

@Hevallo
on Twitter

Contempt of councillors

YOUR REPORT on the Durham teaching assistants' rally (Socialist Worker online) says that a Labour councillor left shouting, “Who else are you going to vote for?”

That sums up the attitude of Blairites. Then they wonder why we voted for Jeremy Corbyn!

@kernow4corbyn
on Twitter

This society breeds terror

AFTER THE horrific Westminster attack, we must confront the issues that fuel terrorism.

Our government must end its wars that create instability in the Middle East. Politicians are cold and remote. We are being let down, not represented.

This random act of terror crystallises the sick nature of society. It is important we unite to stop a racist backlash.

Pauline Wheat-Bowen
by email



FOCUS ON SEXISM

Does the media reflect our values or theirs?

by SADIE ROBINSON

ODIOUS DAILY Mail newspaper columnist Sarah Vine promoted herself with sexist drivel last week. Vine used a meeting between Scottish first minister Nicola Sturgeon and Tory prime minister Theresa May to talk about their legs—for several paragraphs.

Apparently Sturgeon's legs are more “shapely” and “flirty” compared to May's “famously long extremities”.

Vile sexism is at the heart of the mainstream media. Tabloids frequently run images and articles that belittle women and treat them as sex objects.

Vine claimed she was just giving readers what they want. “This is a popular newspaper,” she wrote. “Part of what we do is mix high and low, the sublime and the ridiculous.”

One might wonder where the sublime is in the Mail. But is it true that the media is sexist because ordinary people are?

Structured

Some working class people can hold sexist ideas. Women's oppression is structured into class society and this affects people's ideas.

But there is also a tradition of fighting that oppression. And ideas on women's rights and place in the world have shifted massively.

In the mid-1980s nearly half the public thought a woman's job was to “look after the home and family”. But by 2012 it was 13 percent. The percentage of people who thought women with a child under school age should stay at home nearly halved between 1989 and 2012.

The ruling class puts effort and money into promoting reactionary ideas because people don't naturally hold them. Newspaper columnists whine about “political

“Ideas on women's rights and place in the world have shifted massively



The Daily Mail's odious front page

correctness gone mad” because people disagree with them.

For all the media attacks on refugees, an estimated third of people in Britain have done something to help them. Many newspapers encourage hostility to abortion rights—yet most people in Britain support them.

The media isn't simply reactionary—if it was, no one would read it. Battles over ideas mean the media sometimes reflects opposing views—and divisions within the ruling class.

So papers may run stories attacking bankers or opposing wars. But they will also try and push gains in a direction that better fit with dominant ideas.

For instance, women's newspaper supplements talk up empowerment—achieved by wearing the right clothes or following the latest diet.

The press “celebrates” greater openness about sex by redefining lap dancing from something exploitative and seedy to something liberating.

The media promotes reactionary ideas and accepts the system as it is because it is owned by rich and powerful people. They are part of a ruling class with an interest in maintaining the current system.

So the media pushes sexist, racist and homophobic ideas that divide people against each other. It scapegoats migrants for crises in public services that have been caused by neoliberal economic policies and underfunding.

It attacks strikers as “irresponsible” and benefit claimants as “scroungers” while the real scroungers, the rich, are hailed as “wealth creators”. And those who question any of these ideas, such as Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, come under unrelenting attack.

The ideas in the media aren't horrible because they reflect most people—it's because they reflect the ruling class.

THE FAT CAT CONTROLLERS WHO STOLE THE RAILWAYS

As the fight to stop bosses pushing the dangerous driver only operation throughout the rail network spreads, **Raymie Kiernan** lifts the lid on the private interests at work behind the scenes in the train industry

EVERY TIME you pay for a train ticket the money goes to fill the coffers of some of the wealthiest private equity funds in the world.

And that overpriced buffet car sandwich isn't only funding billionaire fraudster Richard Branson's lifestyle. It also finds its way to the top investment banks.

Train operators such as Arriva or Govia own nothing but their branding.

They operate stations that are owned by Network Rail and trains owned by Roscos—or “rolling stock operating companies”.

Staff are inherited and passed on from operator to operator.

Arriva and Govia are pushing to introduce driver only operation (DOO) on new trains, and passengers will pay exorbitant fares to travel on them.

Those trains are effectively funded by vulture capitalists of one kind or another.

Operators hire trains from firms such as Angel Trains, one of nine Roscos that own the fleet of passenger and freight trains in Britain.

But these firms don't build trains—they only finance them and profit handsomely from the rent.

The 1994 privatisation of British Rail created three rolling stock firms which grabbed roughly a third of the former state fleet each.

As with other privatisations, well-placed former senior managers were part of buyouts in the state-sponsored fire sale.

They sold up and made millions as the big players moved in. When Porterbrook and Eversholt Rail Group were first sold on after privatisation vulture capitalists made £400 million and

£316 million respectively. It was not unlike the Tories' Royal Mail sell-off scandal a couple of years ago.

Angel Trains is the other one of the original three Roscos. Until

1997, Japanese investment bank Nomura controlled it.

It made over £300 million after Angel became a wholly owned subsidiary of RBS bank, in a sale just shy of £400 million.

After the 2008 economic crash RBS sold Angel Trains for £3.6 billion.

Today the firm has three major shareholders that have since bought out the rest of the original consortium that RBS sold it to.

One of them is private equity firm AMP Capital, another is the huge Canadian pension fund managers PSP Investments.

Investments

Both claim almost £100 billion in investments globally. AMP announced half yearly profits in August last year of over £400 million.

The third is London Stock Exchange-listed International Public Partnerships Limited, an “infrastructure investment company”.

It specialises in “private finance initiative (PFI), public private partnerships (PPP) and similar methods”. The firm has been handing its shareholders cash dividends, increasing 2.5 percent a year on average for the last decade.

It recorded £175 million profit in 2016, nearly double what it made in 2015.

And the bosses at Angel boast about how the firm “is passionate about financing” and is “unique” in providing its stock to all train operators in Britain.

It creamed over £350 million from

revenues last year.

It goes on to boast “that the national fleet will grow by between 51 and 99 percent, with an average of 17 new trains being delivered weekly between now and 2020”.

Angel's shareholders have a nice cash cow for many years to come—and it's our cash they're creaming off.

Porterbrook and Eversholt own the lion's share of Britain's train fleet along with Angel Trains.

Porterbrook—whose owner investors now include Deutsche Bank—doubled its profits in 2016.

And one of Eversholt's major shareholders is US investment bank Morgan Stanley, which posted a £1.2 billion profit last year.

The consortium that bought up Eversholt in 2010 included investment fund 3i infrastructure.

When 3i sold its stake in 2015 it netted over £350 million in proceeds

An independent regulator?

THE RAIL Safety and Standards Board (RSSB) is often described as “independent” in the press. But members can be “any company playing a part in operating or supporting the British railway system”.

Some 28 passenger train operators are current members,

from the sale. And now even more firms are fighting for space at the trough.

Over the last year private equity fund SL Capital and investment firm Rock Infrastructure have financed two deals for new trains for a total of £800 million.

This is just one section of the privatised rail industry.

But the global interests at stake in it run into the billions over the length of the franchises that their investments are funding trains for.

But none of them have any interest in running safe, reliable and comfortable train journeys for the travelling public.

They are only interested in getting a slice of the privatisation free-for-all being fed by the Tories.

The gravy train has gone on long enough—it's time to renationalise the rail.

including the owners of Southern, Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR). GTR boss Charles Horton, pictured, is one of ten non-executive directors.

Just three members of the board are described by RSSB as “independent”.

RSSB said itself, “We're owned by the industry.”

Workers' resistance causes
severe delays to train bosses

WORKERS across three rail firms are resisting the Tories' plans to soften up the rail industry for even more privatisation (see page 20).

RMT union members, mainly train guards, were set for a coordinated strike against one important aspect of their agenda on Saturday—the extension of driver only operation (DOO).

DOO was part of the conclusion in 2011 of the McNulty rail review, initially set up by New Labour. It was designed to maintain rail firms' profits and to continue with the rail privatisations.

New Labour was voted out before it concluded but the Tories fervently adopted its recommendations.

Not only did McNulty's prescription of mass job cuts to boost profit appeal to the Tories, they saw an opportunity to try and weaken the unions.

The rail fat cats unsurprisingly backed it too. They don't care that DOO is dangerous. And taking a worker whose responsibility is the safety and welfare of passengers off trains at a time when passenger numbers are rising will make it more dangerous still.

The Tory objective to extend

DOO is clashing with rail workers' determination to defend the safety of passengers. This has fuelled the disputes on the railways over the last year. Slashing guard numbers and loading extra responsibility onto drivers makes no sense unless you are looking at the bottom line rather than safety.

The move toward DOO is wrapped in language of “modernisation”. On the glossy publicity this is punted as faster, greener, more spacious trains.

Passengers

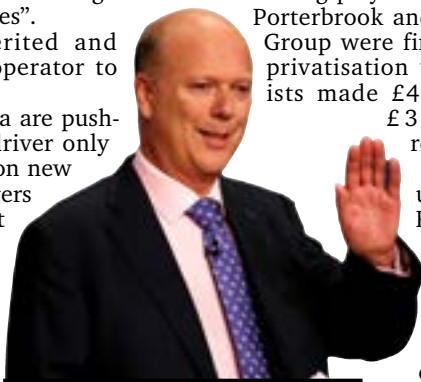
And with severe overcrowding on Britain's train services that can sound appealing for passengers.

But the bosses want to “modernise” workers' conditions—that means undermining safety.

Transport secretary Chris Grayling argued last December, “Our railways need to adapt and change in order to be able to cope with the growth that they have already experienced and that which lies ahead.”

His Department for Transport has embarked on a voyage to wreck less the industry.

But rail workers can save transport if they mutiny and chuck Grayling and his mates overboard.



Tory transport minister Chris Grayling

“Shareholders have a nice cash cow for many years to come—and it's our cash



WHAT WE STAND FOR

These are the core politics of the Socialist Workers Party.

INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

Under capitalism workers' labour creates all profit. A socialist society can only be constructed when the working class seizes control of the means of production and democratically plans how they are used.

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed as the established Labour and trade union leaders say.

It has to be overthrown. Capitalism systematically degrades the natural world. Ending environmental crisis means creating a new society.

THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers.

The working class needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia.

At most parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system.

Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

INTERNATIONALISM

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries.

We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls.

We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country.

In Russia the result was state capitalism, not socialism. In Eastern Europe and China a similar system was later established by Stalinist parties. We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

We are for real social, economic and political equality of women. We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

We defend the right of believers to practise their religion without state interference.

THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party.

Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests. We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

To join us, turn to page 16 or go to www.swp.org.uk or phone 020 7840 5602 for more information

{ SOCIALIST WORKER } BRANCH MEETINGS

Weekly meetings to discuss political issues and our local interventions. All welcome.

ABERDEEN

The revolutionary ideas of James Connolly

Wed 12 Apr, 6pm,
Belmont Cinema Cafe,
49 Belmont St,
AB10 1JS

BARNLEY

A rebel's guide to Rosa Luxemburg

Thu 13 Apr, 7pm,
YMCA,
Blucher St,
S70 1AP

BRADFORD

1917—when workers took power in Russia

Thu 13 Apr, 7pm,
Glyde House,
Little Horton Lane
(opposite the ice rink),
BD5 0BQ

BRISTOL

Is human nature a barrier to socialism?

Wed 12 Apr, 7.30pm,
YHA,
14 Narrow Quay,
BS1 4QA

BURNLEY AND PENDLE
Class war on benefits

Wed 12 Apr, 7.30pm,
Red Triangle Cafe,
160 St James's St,
BB11 1NR

CARDIFF

The rise of the far right in Europe

Wed 12 Apr, 7.30pm,
New York Diner,
CF24 3BQ

CHESTERFIELD

Ideology—where do ideas come from?

Thu 13 Apr, 7.30pm,
Chesterfield Library,
New Beetwell St,
S40 1QN

COLCHESTER

Fake news and alternative facts—media in the 21st century

Wed 12 Apr, 7.30pm,
The Odd One Out,
28 Mersea Rd, CO2 7ET

HUDDERSFIELD

Climate change—after Trump, how can we fight for our planet?

Wed 12 Apr, 6.30pm,
Brian Jackson House,
2 New North Parade (near both train and bus stations),
HD1 5JP

SOCIALIST WORKER BRANCH MEETINGS

Frontex EU border guards patrol the Mediterranean, condemning refugees to death

HOW CAN THE LEFT SHAPE BREXIT?

LONDON: ISLINGTON

Thu 13 Apr, 7pm,
The Old Fire Station,
84 Mayton St,
N7 6QT

COVENTRY

Wed 12 Apr, 7.30pm,
West Indian Centre,
159 Spon St,
CV1 3BB

BRIGHTON

Thu 13 Apr, 7.30pm,
Friends Meeting House,
Ship St,
BN1 1AF

HULL

Human nature—are we too selfish for socialism?

Thu 13 Apr, 7pm,
Cafe licious,
104 Cottingham Rd,
HU6 7RZ

LANCASTER

Why we need a revolution to end racism

Thu 20 Apr, 7pm,
Friends Meeting House,
Meeting House Lane,
LA1 1TX

LEEDS: CITY CENTRE

Why won't the Tories fund the NHS?

Thu 13 Apr, 7pm,
Swarthmore Education Centre,
2-7 Woodhouse Square,
LS3 1AD

LEICESTER

The case against borders—why we oppose immigration controls

Wed 26 Apr, 7pm,
Leicester LGBT Centre,
15 Wellington St, LE1 6HH

LONDON: BRENT AND HARROW

Why we need a revolution to end racism

Thu 13 Apr, 7.30pm,
The Pepperpot Centre,
1a Thorpe Close,
Ladbroke Grove (very close to the station), W10 5XL

LONDON: EALING

The revolutionary ideas of Karl Marx

Thu 13 Apr, 7.30pm,
YMCA West London,
25 St Mary's Rd, W5 2RE

LONDON: HACKNEY

April 1917—the turning point in Russia's red year

Thu 13 Apr, 7.30pm,
The Round Chapel,
2 Powerscroft Rd (corner Lower Clapton Rd), E5 0PU

LONDON: HARINGEY

The battle of Wood Green—how we stopped the fascists in 1977

Wed 12 Apr, 7.30pm,
St John Vianney Church Hall,
386 West Green Rd, N15 3QH

LONDON: NEWHAM

France—the resistable rise of Marine Le Pen

Wed 12 Apr, 7pm,
Stratford Advice Arcade,
107-109 The Grove (next to Morrisons car park), E15 1HP

LONDON: TOWER HAMLETS

Deliveroo, Uber and the gig economy—is the working class disappearing?

Wed 12 Apr, 7pm,
Oxford House,
Derbyshire St, E2 6HG

MANCHESTER: CHORLTON

Deliveroo, Uber and the gig economy—is the working class disappearing?

Wed 12 Apr, 7pm,
Chorlton Central Church
(Meeting Room),
Barlow Moor Rd, M21 8BF

MANCHESTER: CITY CENTRE

Russia, October 1917—was it a coup?

Thu 13 Apr, 7pm,
Friends Meeting House,
6 Mount St, M2 5NS

MANCHESTER: LONGSIGHT

Abortion—why we defend a woman's right to choose

Thu 13 Apr, 7.30pm,
Inspire,
747 Stockport Rd,
M19 3AR

NEWCASTLE

Why we want a united Ireland

Thu 13 Apr, 7pm,
Broadacre House,
Market St,
NE1 6HQ

NORWICH

The housing crisis—what do socialists say?

Thu 13 Apr, 7.30pm,
Vauxhall Centre,
Johnson Place, NR2 2SA

NOTTINGHAM

Revolution and women's liberation

Wed 12 Apr, 7.30pm,
International
Community Centre,
61b Mansfield Rd, NG1 3FN

OXFORD

Abortion—why we defend a woman's right to choose

Wed 12 Apr, 7.30pm,
Restore,
Manzil Way (off Cowley Rd),
OX4 1YH

PORTSMOUTH

Lenin and the Russian Revolution

Wed 12 Apr, 7.30pm,
Somerstown
Community Centre,
River's St,
PO5 4EZ

SCARBOROUGH

Fake news and alternative facts—media in the 21st century

Wed 12 Apr, 7pm,
Tap and Spile,
94 Falsgrave Rd,
YO12 5AZ

SHEFFIELD: CITY CENTRE

Abortion—why we defend a woman's right to choose

Thu 13 Apr, 7pm,
Central United

Reformed Church,
60 Norfolk St (near Crucible Theatre),
S1 2JB

SOUTHAMPTON

The case against borders—why we oppose immigration controls

Wed 12 Apr, 7.30pm,
Central Baptist Church Hall,
Devonshire Rd,
SO15 2GY

SWANSEA

Will there be a war in the South China Sea?

Thu 13 Apr, 7.30pm,
Brynmill Community Centre,
St Albans Rd,
SA2 0BP

WOLVERHAMPTON AND WALSALL

French elections—how does the left stop Le Pen?

Wed 12 Apr, 7.30pm,
Wild Bytes Cafe,
Darlington St,
WV1 4HW

{ MOVEMENT EVENTS }

BARNLEY
May Day Festival of Solidarity

Sat 29-Sun 30 Apr, 1pm-11pm,
The Old School House,
Blackburn Lane,
S75 2BA.

maydaysolidarity.wordpress.com

NATIONAL

Marxism 2017—ideas for a world in turmoil

6-9 July,
Central London.

A four-day political festival of meetings, debate, film showings, music and much more, hosted by the Socialist Workers Party.

To book your ticket go to marxismfestival.org.uk or call the Marxism festival office on 020 7840 5620

NATIONAL

March for homes

Sat 24 June, 11am,
Central London.
Called by Axe the Housing Act.

Go to bit.ly/2nSiean

Stand Up To Racism national conference

Sat 21 Oct,
Central London.

For more information go to standuptoracism.org.uk

MAY DAY GREETINGS



To mark International Workers' Day on 1 May, every year we print solidarity messages from readers, union branches and campaigns

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- £55 gets you two columns
- £95 gets you three columns
- ask us for larger greetings

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Neruda film tells the cat and mouse tale of a witch hunt

A new Chilean film is a gripping tale of the manhunt for Pablo Neruda, but it doesn't bring out the full richness of the Communist poet, writes **Mario Nain**

DIRECTOR PABLO Larrain's *Neruda* tells the tale of Chilean Communist Pablo Neruda, considered one of the greatest poets of the Spanish language.

While parts of Larrain's film are fictional, it is firmly based in real historic events.

It revolves around the period when the Communist Party was outlawed in 1948, which Chileans refer to as "La Ley Maltida" (The Damned Law).

At the time Neruda was a senator representing a mining community in northern Chile.

He was hunted by the Chilean government and forced to go into hiding.

The film centres on two protagonists—Neruda (Luis Gnecco) and fictional police inspector Oscar Peluchonneau (Gael García Bernal).

In his rather foggy existence, the cop devotes his body and soul to hunt down Neruda.

Repressed

Bernal manages to bring out the complex feelings of a lonely and repressed individual.

In a funny way, you actually feel sorry for Peluchonneau.

Gnecco also gives a convincing performance, even imitating the poet's distinctive voice.

This chase between a hunter and a prey takes place across the spectacular forests and mountains of Chile and ends at South America's most southwesterly point.

Larrain skillfully captures this wild immensity.

But it is disappointing that Larrain doesn't tap into the diverse richness of Neruda's experience of living and dreaming among the people who



LUIS GNECCO stars as Chilean Communist poet Pablo Neruda (right)

helped him during this period.

Before managing to escape to Paris, Neruda was hidden by workers in shanty towns and with the indigenous Mapuche for a year and a half.

He was linked with the struggles of Chile's working class and oppressed, and it is disappointing that this intent wasn't brought out more in the film.

Partly because of this, the film is only a partial portrayal of a figure

who dreamt and fought for a new beginning.

Enchanting

Neruda was an important literary figure, who created many enchanting romantic poems.

But he also wrote political works including one of the powerful poems against the fascists in Spain, "España en el corazón" (Spain in Our Hearts).

Larrain's picture is entertaining as a story of the hunt for Neruda and is worth seeing.

But perhaps another Chilean will take up the difficult task of bringing the full richness of his character to the big screen.

Neruda

Directed by Pablo Larrain
In cinemas from 7 April

The power of the movements against our rulers' wars

EXHIBITION

PEOPLE POWER—FIGHTING FOR PEACE

Imperial War Museum, London SE1 6HZ.
Until 28 August.
Adult tickets £10, children £5

FOR ANYONE who thinks the Imperial War Museum can only be interested in putting the case for war, their People Power exhibition will be quite a shock.

It clearly gives the views of anti-war protesters from the last 100 years. This is done through

film, audio statements, interviews with film stars and people from the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) and Stop the War Coalition.

I was 23 during CND's first Aldermaston March in 1958. Protesters marched from London to the nuclear arms establishment at Aldermaston and then annually from Aldermaston to London against the nuclear bomb.

You could see the impact it had on society.

There is film of the women at Greenham



Marching in London against Trident nuclear weapons

Common camp surrounding the perimeter fence against cruise missiles at the Royal Airforce base in the 1980s. Conscientious objectors in the First and

Second World wars are represented as well with quotations.

They were treated as traitors and many were imprisoned and beaten up. There is also a

government film telling people what to do in the event of nuclear war.

It tells people to put sandbags on the stairs and build hidey holes in the garden to protect the family.

The exhibition brought back memories of participating in marches and demonstrations.

The exhibition is important to see as it really spells out how much effect the anti-war movement has had on society—and how we can continue it today.

Mary Phillips

FILM

REVOLUTION—NEW ART FOR A NEW WORLD

Directed by Margy Kinmonth.
Out on DVD

THE 1917 Russian Revolution unleashed a torrent of creativity in every field of art, from painting and sculpture to acting, poetry and architecture.

But much of the information about these artists has been lost.



Fantasy (1925)
Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin

Revolution—New Art for a New World aims to uncover this hidden history.

The film maker's interpretation of the revolution obscures the history. But there's enough information to read between the lines.

To read Socialist Worker's review go to bit.ly/2fjwpid

NETFLIX

THE GET DOWN—PART 2

On Netflix 7 April

SET IN the Bronx, New York City, in the 1970s, The Get Down follows the rise of hip hop and disco music through the eyes of teenagers.

Fans will be pleased to see the show's return. The first six episodes were great, not to mention the soundtrack, dance routines and artist Grandmaster Flash.

TOP 5 BOOKS

Bestsellers at Bookmarks, the socialist Bookshop

- Sound System—The Political Power of Music**
Dave Randall
- The Case Against Borders**
Dave Sewell and Charlie Kimber
- State and Revolution**
Vladimir Lenin
- Why Marx Was Right**
Terry Eagleton
- A Rebel's Guide to Lenin**
Ian Birchall

Phone 020 7637 1848
bookmarksbookshop.co.uk
Why not visit the shop at 1 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3QE

SOME politicians are desperate to wrap themselves in the union jack flag—and not just on the right. Many Labour MPs are obsessed with patriotism and the “national interest”.

Right wing Labour MP Chuka Umunna told Labour members last year not to “underestimate the importance of us illustrating that we are as patriotic as anyone else”.

And soft left MP Lisa Nandy bemoaned Labour’s supposed neglect of patriotism allowing it “to become the exclusive property of the right”.

Part of this is a response to Labour’s internal crisis and poor figures in the polls.

Some MPs prefer to chase after the nationalism and anti-immigrant racism of the Tories and Ukip rather than defy it. Others will use any stick to beat Jeremy Corbyn’s leadership.

But the problem is as old as Labour and goes to the heart of its ideology. Labour has always been torn over whether it is the party of the working class or the party of the nation.

That tension goes a long way to explaining why Labour behaves the way it does.

The idea underlying Labour is that the interests of the working class can be defended within the capitalist system. To do that it must win government.

But capitalism is organised through nation states which have their own interests to defend.

And the British state currently has a lot to worry about. Brexit and the possibility of Scottish independence come after years of economic crisis and decades of imperial decline.

Politicians who seek to manage that state need to show themselves capable of holding it together.

Horried

That’s why Labour MPs are always horrified when their activists or their leader seem to clash with the British state.

It’s why many MPs were outraged when Corbyn refused to block the triggering of Brexit or a second referendum on Scottish independence in parliament.

They resent not only his opposition to nuclear weapons and imperialist wars but even his reluctance to bow before the queen or sing the national anthem.

Even Labour’s current crisis is framed by the right as a betrayal of the national interest. The New Statesman magazine last week mournfully accused Labour of failing in its “constitutional duty” to play the role of “Her Majesty’s Opposition”.

But the “national interest” is a fake unity. There is a very real division in society, between the workers whose labour keeps the economy turning and the bosses who exploit them.

Their interests are fundamentally opposed. Bosses’ profits

LABOUR & ‘NATIONAL INTEREST’

There’s nothing new about MPs’ calls for the Labour Party to embrace ‘patriotism’—and nothing good can come of putting nation before class, warns Nick Clark



come at workers’ expense, and any gains for workers represent a threat to bosses.

The state is supposed to be above this conflict, elected by all classes to govern for all classes. But the state isn’t neutral at all. It relies on a “strong” economy.

And in a system whose health depends on exploiting workers, this comes down to the interests of the bosses. So when it boils down to it, representing the national interest



Labour has to work harder to show it can run a capitalist state ‘responsibly’

really means managing the interests of the ruling class.

This is an issue for all politicians, but it’s particularly acute for Labour. The Tories and the racists of Ukip don’t have to worry much about proving their commitment to nationalism.

The “butcher’s apron” of the flag suits them down to the ground.

Labour has to work harder to prove it can be trusted to run that state “responsibly”. This isn’t just about cuts and

austerity, but also showing Labour will look after the core institutions of the state.

So some of the most pompous displays of nationalism have come from Labour MPs.

When Labour formed its first government in 1924, its ministers fell over themselves to conform to the pomp and ceremony of going to the king to form the government.

Leader Ramsay MacDonald assured King George his “earnest desire was to serve his king and country”.

He promised to use “all of his influence and that of his moderate and immediate friends” to stop Labour MPs singing socialist anthem The Red Flag in parliament.

Electoral

For some in Labour, the idea of lumping together those who are divided is appealing for electoral reasons.

Labour’s focus on getting elected means it tries to appeal for votes from all sections of public opinion, left or right. Holding them all together can be a fine balancing act of contradictory policies.

Using patriotism to unite everyone behind a fictitious “national interest” can be a useful way of holding those contradictions together—or even concealing them.

As Umunna wrote, Labour politicians should try and “harness the power of patriotism to accentuate our essential sameness and build bonds of trust between Britons of all backgrounds”.

LABOUR politicians hope that giving nationalism a progressive sheen can make right wing policies that suit the bosses and the state seem palatable to their left wing supporters.

They also hope that giving progressive ideas a nationalist tinge can make them acceptable to the right wing voters they hope to attract.

But this balancing act can’t last forever. Conflicts will inevitably break out, forcing Labour to pick a side or appear paralysed and weak.

MPs often say they have to represent all of their constituents, no matter who they voted for or which class they’re part of.

This simply means abdicating from putting forward workers’ interests whenever these clash with the needs of the system.

And Labour has repeatedly proved itself willing to do this even at the cost of votes.

It destroyed its support in Scotland by lining up with the Tories to oppose independence. Many Labour right wingers oppose Brexit despite knowing the risk of alienating millions of Labour voters who support it.

The idea of an inclusive “progressive patriotism” that includes Britons of immigrant backgrounds is held up as an

alternative to the reactionary nationalism of the racist right.

In reality it fuels it. As well as uniting those that should be divided, nationalism divides those who should be united.

However “Britishness” is defined, it will always exclude someone—in particular the most recent immigrants.

If “Britain” is seen as united by a common interest, they will be the candidates to take the blame when British bosses attack British workers’ living standards.

In practice the figures who have argued for Labour to be more patriotic have also called for more restrictions on immigration.

ANY FORM of nationalism gives encouragement to the racists and undermines the arguments against them. The idea that patriotism can be progressive almost always means the left falling in behind the right.

This reflects the deeper conflict between the interests of the state and the working class.

One tragedy of Labour’s embrace of nationalism is that it traps the Labour left.

When Jeremy Corbyn was elected leader in 2015, inspiring huge support and humbling the right, this wasn’t by appealing to the national interest. His message was anti-racist, anti-war and anti-austerity.

Demise

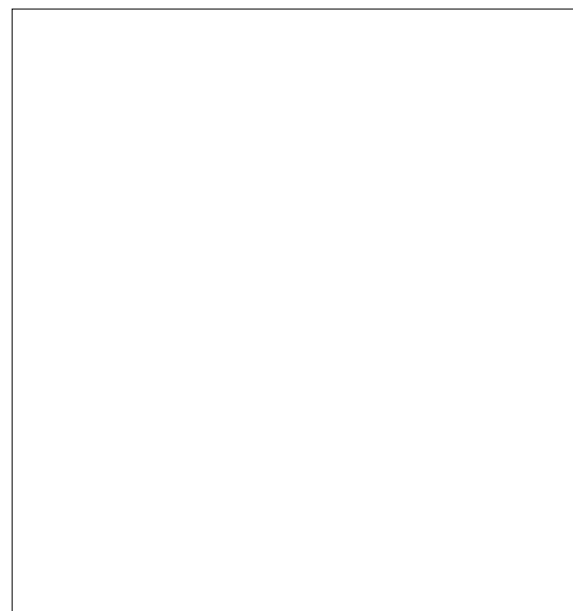
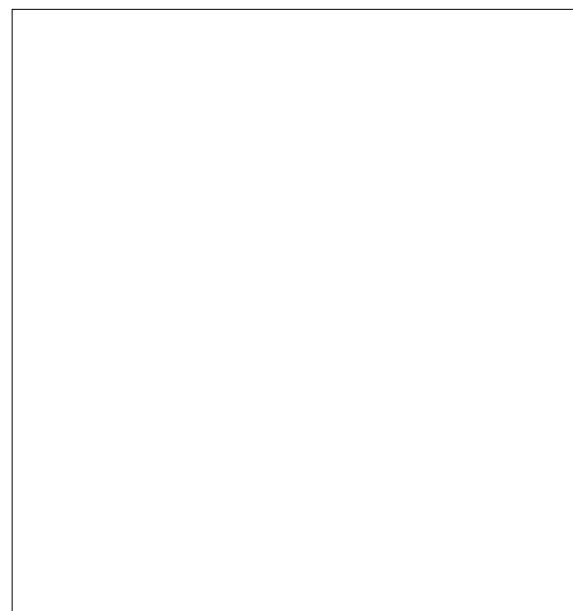
In Scotland Labour lost support primarily by being the party of cuts, privatisation and war. Its attempt to wrap itself in a Saltire flag as well as a union jack before the last general election did not stem its demise.

All of the major attacks the right have launched about Corbyn—over war in Syria, Trident, nuclear power and staying in the EU—have been about his failure to act in the “national interest”.

On each one of these Corbyn has been pressured to back down. The Labour left accepts the idea that it’s possible—and necessary—to represent workers, bosses, left and right in parliament.

That puts it on the right’s terrain, strengthens the arguments the right uses to hold the left down and undermines its ability to offer an alternative.

The world is bigger than the nation state, and the working



class in particular is international. Workers have a common interest in every country, against the capitalist system of nation states that divides them.

Only by breaking with the illusion of “national interest” to realise that international interest can the left’s ideas succeed.

JEREMY Corbyn and MPs Chuka Umunna and Lisa Nandy (opposite page), **the queen’s interests are not ours** (top), **Labour leader Ramsay MacDonald at the palace in 1924** (above), **former prime minister Gordon Brown preaching patriotism last week** (below)

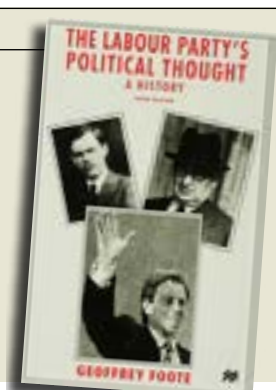
READ MORE

● **The Labour Party —A Marxist History** by Donny Gluckstein and Tony Cliff £5

Also available online at the Marxist Internet Archive bit.ly/2ohcWWq

● **The Labour Party’s Political Thought —A History** by Geoffrey Foote £26.99

Available at Bookmarks, the socialist bookshop. Phone 020 7637 1848 or go to bookmarksbookshop.co.uk



How Lenin won the party to fight for workers’ power

A sharp argument within the Bolshevik party stopped it from supporting imperialist war—and helped push the revolution forward



LENIN (centre) argued for a break with the Provisional Government and for workers and peasants to take power

1917 TIMELINE

4 April (17 April in the modern calendar)

● Lenin delivers his April Theses. The Bolsheviks produce an educational pamphlet on Political Parties in Russia and the Tasks of the Proletariat

● A steamer ship Trotsky is travelling on is stopped by the British Navy in Canada. He and other socialists are thrown into a British prison for opposing the war

that the liberal leaders of the government negotiate a peace settlement.

They were in danger, as the revolutionary Leon Trotsky wrote, of becoming a “loyal opposition”.

The revolutionary Vladimir Lenin, living in exile, saw the danger and snuck back into Russia with a list of ten short arguments—his April Theses.

He argued that the revolution was already becoming a confrontation between capitalists and workers.

Lenin insisted there should be no support for the war, which remained an imperialist bloodbath, and no support for the Provisional Government.

Workers and peasants had to take power through the soviets, putting the land and banks under their control, and abolishing the police, army and bureaucracy.

Finally, there had to be a complete break from the old “social democratic” left wing

parties across Europe.

Instead there should be a new “international” of revolutionary parties.

This was important as the old parties had supported their own governments in the war.

At first barely any of the Bolshevik leaders supported Lenin.

Shocked

Many were shocked as Lenin had argued that—in a backward country like Russia—the revolution would not immediately lead to a struggle for socialism.

But he had much more support among the Bolshevik workers and activists, who already opposed the Bolshevik leaders’ approach.

Lenin’s original theory didn’t fit with how the revolution played out.

But crucially it had stressed the central role of workers, and now its focus on workers’ struggle encouraged activists to push the fight forward.

So when Lenin changed his argument and pushed for the Bolsheviks to start fighting again, Bolshevik members supported him.

By the end of April, Lenin’s position had won out.

Now the Bolsheviks had to take their new arguments into the soviets.

They had to fight alongside other workers and push them on to overthrowing the government and running society for themselves.

This is part of a series of weekly articles on the Russian Revolution. Read our coverage at tinyurl.com/sw1917

Abuse survivor leads fight for new law

by SADIE ROBINSON

A SURVIVOR of the child sexual exploitation scandal in Rotherham, South Yorkshire, is demanding the government does more to help victims.

Sammy Woodhouse spoke out about the abuse, including to Socialist Worker, using the pseudonym Jessica.

She was abused from the age of 14 by Arshid Hussain, who was found guilty of several offences last year.

But Sammy said police refused to act on the abuse—and even took action to stop Hussain being punished.

Marked

She said, “One time I went missing. I was with my abuser and an officer came in a marked car. He told him, ‘I’ve come to give you a heads up that there could be a warrant out for your arrest.’”

Sammy has now waived her anonymity. “I just felt that I’m constantly living in his shadow and I’d had enough,” she told Socialist Worker. Since revealing her identity, more people have



PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN



SURVIVOR SAMMY Woodhouse (above) spoke out over the abuse that took place in Rotherham (left)

told Sammy they have come forward to report abuse.

Now she is campaigning for “Sammy’s Law” to stop the criminalisation of victims who are forced to commit crimes by their abusers.

She says the law would make “a huge difference”.

At the age of 14, police

caught Sammy in bed with her abuser. She had a truncheon in her bag which Hussain had asked her to keep.

“I was arrested and he wasn’t,” she said. “If I went to a job interview I’d have to sit there and go into my abuse to explain that.”

“I’m not saying that eve-

rybody’s records should be wiped clean. What I’m saying is let’s look at circumstances.

“I shouldn’t, as a victim of a crime, be blamed for that crime.”

Sammy has written to the government and wants the issue taken up nationally.

“We need to recognise as a

country that there are adults grooming children to commit crimes,” she said.

“We need to put something in place that shows victims they can come forward and report their abuse without being prosecuted. We need to stop victim blaming.”

Sammy said survivors

speaking out has helped win changes in Rotherham and made “a huge difference”.

But she stressed that investigations into allegations against the police relating to the scandal will take time to complete.

Accountable

“When we start seeing professionals held accountable, we’ll be able to move forward,” she said.

Survivors’ fight for justice has helped to secure convictions of abusers in Rotherham.

“But for too many people the fear that the authorities will treat them as the problem still stops them from coming forward.

“I’ve proved in court that he was to blame,” said Sammy. “And yet at 31 years old I’m still being blamed for something that wasn’t my fault.”

“We should be able to have a future just like anybody else does.”

More online
Survivor vows to fight for whole truth bit.ly/2oumj1E

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Public sector wage cuts drive workers out of health service

Millions are worse off after the Tories' latest 'slap in the face' to the people who keep our public services going. Activists told Alistair Farrow it's time to strike against the pay cap

MILLIONS of workers are set to lose thousands of pounds after the government held their wages below inflation again.

Some public sector workers were handed a miserly 1 percent pay rise by the government on Tuesday of last week. With inflation currently at 2.3 percent, this an effective pay cut.

More than £4.3 billion has been cut from NHS staff wages between 2010 and 2016 as a result of the Tory pay cap of 1 percent imposed until 2020.

That means workers are set to lose tens of thousands over the period 2010 to 2020, unless they fight back.

Karen Reissmann from the Unison union's health executive told Socialist Worker in a personal capacity, "We can't go on as we are. Year on year pay is going down."

Meanwhile, Labour and the trade union leadership have offered little real resistance as people suffer.

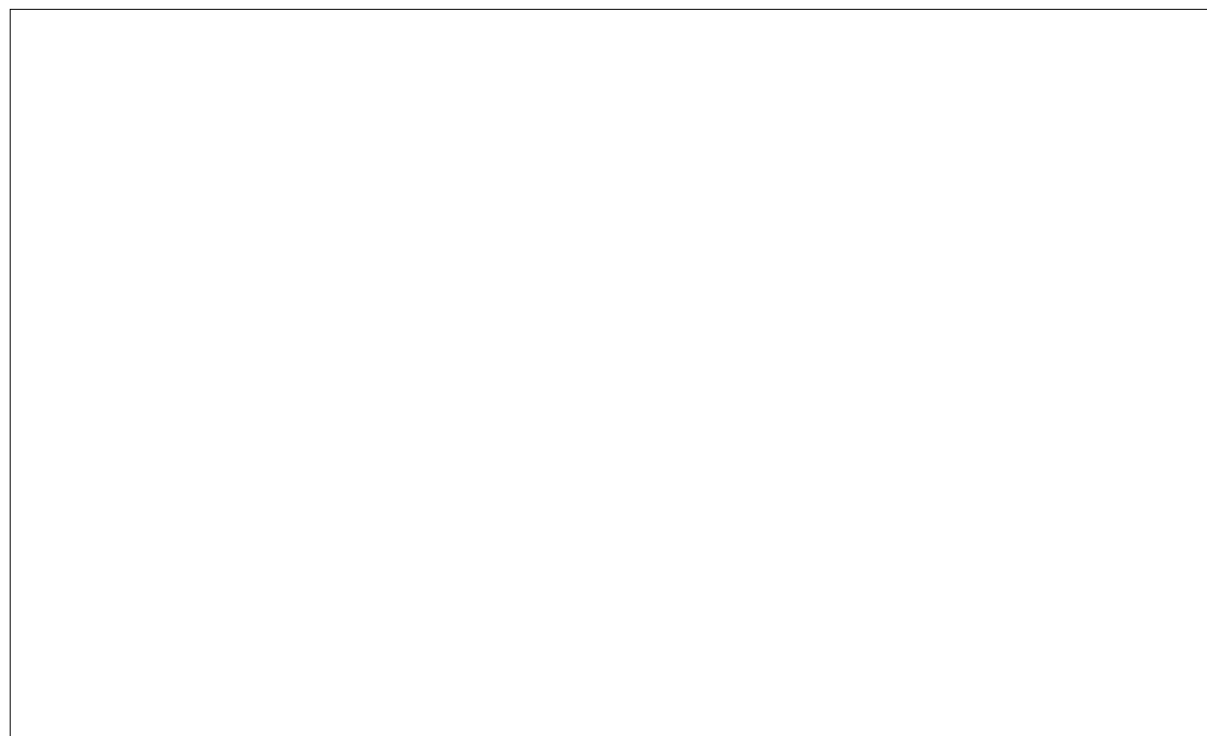
Shocking

The latest pay cuts won't come as a surprise for workers though, shocking as they are. Pay growth has largely been below inflation since the beginning of the economic crisis in 2008.

New Office for National Statistics figures show the pay freeze has meant that average public sector pay dropped below private sector pay for 11 of the last 12 months.

No wonder workers are now leaving the health service at record levels, although this has been offset by those joining. Figures from the Public Accounts Committee show that the proportion of nurses leaving their job increased from 6.8 percent in the period 2010 to 2011 to 9.2 percent in the period 2014 to 2015.

NHS staff left at a rate of



MANY WORKERS are leaving the health service in the wake of massive pay cuts

16 percent last year, a 4 percent increase between 2011 and 2016.

Wages have almost been at a standstill for years while the cost of living has been shooting up.

One nurse, Elin, told Socialist Worker, "The job's emotionally and physically draining but you put up with that because you feel you're making a difference. It's not just about the pay, it's about conditions as well."

The pay freeze will make this worse. Elin said, "The pay freeze will affect the nursing profession as

a whole because it will put people off from training. It's not going to be worth doing a nursing degree."

Junior doctor Yannis Gourtsoyannis agreed. "This latest pay freeze is yet another attack on the NHS," he said.

"It shows how little regard this government has for the people who work in hospitals. Squeezing the workforce is part and parcel of the government's privatisation agenda. They want to undermine the NHS to the point that it's ripened up for further selloffs. Tuesday's announcement is just another slap in the face."

Karen said, "The best response would be national action. The junior doctors' dispute revealed that any sort of fightback can be very popular."

"I've been pushing for national action inside Unison. When the 1 percent pay freeze was confirmed last week, we raised it again."

"There have been proposals for each of Unison's 12 regions to launch a dispute at hospitals in their area over regrading. It could be used as a bridge towards the national dispute we need. We give 100 percent but only get 1 percent."

ALL IN IT TOGETHER

1%

Public sector pay cap, set in March 2016—on top of years of pay restraint

1.4%

Pay rise for MPs set in March 2016—on top of a 10 percent rise in 2015

19%

Pay rise for Sir Andrew Morris, head of Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust in Surrey, bringing his total pay to £215,000

Pay boards do Tories' dirty work

THE organisations which set public sector pay, Pay Review Bodies (PRBs), claim to be independent.

But they are under the government's Office for Manpower Economics, and constrained by the 1 percent pay cap set by the government.

Christina McAnea, head of health at the Unison union, said this "tied the PRB's hands".

"As the PRB itself admits, it can no longer prevent health employees' pay falling way behind wages in almost every part of the economy," she said.

The PRBs were set up in 1971 as a means of undermining collective bargaining at a time of mass strikes.

By 2005 they set the pay of 26 percent of public sector workers. Today that has grown to 45 percent—some 2.5 million people.

FIGURE IT OUT

How much will health workers have lost in total between 2010 and 2020?

Hospital porters **£9,679**

They lost £7,285 since 2010 and are set to lose a further £2,394 by 2020

999 call handlers **£11,263**

They lost £8,679 since 2010 and are set to lose a further £2,617 by 2020

Residential carers **£11,709**

They lost £8,624 since 2010 and are set to lose a further £3,085 by 2020

Staff nurses **£18,360**

They lost £14,572 since 2010 and are set to lose a further £3,788 by 2020

Midwives **£22,702**

They lost £18,011 since 2010 and are set to lose a further £4,691 by 2020

Bring back the fightback

IN 2011 a dispute over public sector pensions rocked the Tory and Lib Dem coalition government.

On 30 November 2011 2.6 million workers went on strike against vicious pension cuts which were to rob them of £10 billion annually.

The dispute continued into 2012, but was sold out by union leaders who made a deal with the coalition.

The TUC union federation and its then general secretary Brendan

Barber—now a lord—wound down the dispute rather than take up the fight. The defeat over pensions gave the Tories confidence. Workers are still paying the price of that betrayal today.

Workers must organise within their workplaces to be strong militant organisations that can take the lead when union leaders falter.

Union leaders must be pressured into calling national strikes to fight back over Tory austerity.



Former TUC head Brendan Barber

IN BRIEF

Car makers gear up for a pension fight

UNITE UNION reps at BMW sites were meeting to discuss strike dates this week after a resounding ballot result for action against bosses' "pension robbery".

BMW workers voted by over 93 percent to strike on a turnout of 72 percent in ballots of almost 3,500 people.

Bosses want to close their pension scheme by 31 May. BMW group just announced an 8 percent surge in its net profit.

The workers make Mini and Rolls Royce cars—which both saw sales increase—and engines at sites in Cowley, Goodwood, Hams Hall and Swindon.

Workers rally over pay in civil service

CIVIL SERVICE workers in the PCS union protested against low public sector pay on Friday of last week.

The government's longrunning 1 percent public sector pay cap (see page 17) means civil service workers have had a real terms pay cut of up to nine percent since 2010. They could lose as much as 20 percent by 2020.

At a rally outside the Treasury in central London, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) worker Andy Roach told Socialist Worker, "I'm 49 years old and I live with my parents. Not out of choice but out of necessity."

●Longer at bit.ly/2otkd5A

Lambeth libraries deal under new fire

OVER 200 people protested outside the closed Carnegie Library in Lambeth, south London, last Saturday. It marked one year since an occupation to keep it open.

Councillor Rachel Heywood, suspended from Lambeth Labour for speaking out against the closures of ten libraries, said the empty building "symbolises all that is wrong" with the council.

It comes after campaigners unearthed emails showing a "secret deal" with GLL, the firm brought in to run some libraries, that raise "disturbing" questions.

Vote for Action on Unison union NEC

VOTING OPENED on Monday for the Unison union's national executive committee (NEC) elections.

Socialist Worker supports the slate of the Unison Action broad left, which calls for real resistance to Tory austerity.

It is standing on a platform of defending pensions, terms, conditions, the NHS and breaking the public sector pay cap. Unison Action also urges a fight against racism and the scapegoating of migrant workers.

●For list of candidates, go to unisonaction-broadleft.co.uk

ANTI-FASCISM



COUNTER-PROTESTERS outnumbered the fascist groups

PICTURE: SOCIALIST WORKER

Nazis need cops' help for a march in London

ANTI-FASCISTS outnumbered Nazis in central London last Saturday. Britain First and the English Defence League had each called national demonstrations.

But they mustered fewer than 200 between them, while around 300 people joined a counter-demonstration called by Unite Against Fascism (UAF).

Weyman Bennett, joint national secretary of UAF, told Socialist Worker that after last month's attack in Westminster, "The Nazis expected their protests to be on the same scale as fascist protests held after the killing of Lee Rigby."

"But they have yet to benefit from the racism that the Tories and Ukip are pushing."

Labour Party member Jenny Kidman said she was there because "you have to show your opposition".

Student Kathryn added, "There's lots of racism around but there is also resistance—

and we're the resistance."

Police viciously attacked anti-fascist protesters, dragging several out and pinning them on the ground before arresting them. Some 14 anti-fascist protesters were arrested, but later released.

Despite an enormous police presence it took around half an hour for the cops to force anti-fascists down Whitehall.

Protester Sophia told Socialist Worker, "I had about ten police officers in my face. I was making eye contact with

them saying I can't breathe. But they just kept pushing forward."

Louise from the RMT union said the cops were "really aggressive". "I watched a girl get slammed up against a wall and arrested," she told Socialist Worker.

Meanwhile cops facilitated a short Britain First march.

But anti-fascists remained defiant as chants of "Follow your leader—shoot yourself like Adolf Hitler" rang out across Whitehall.

BIRMINGHAM AND LANARKSHIRE

THE EDL plans to protest in Birmingham this Saturday. It is once again trying to ramp up racism in the wake of the Westminster attacks last month.

Birmingham UAF has called a unity rally from 1-4pm in Victoria Square. Go to bit.ly/2nOnODv
Anti-fascists are also

organising in Wishaw, Lanarkshire, after the Scottish Defence League (SDL) has said it will march on 15 April.

The SDL wants to march to stir up racism and anti-refugee sentiment.

UAF Scotland has called a counter-demonstration from 1pm on Wishaw Road. Go to bit.ly/2oQb0kz

ANTHONY GRAINGER INQUIRY

Officers prepared statements together

by ELEANOR CLAXTON-MAYER

THE INQUIRY into the shooting of Anthony Grainger heard last week that police were afterwards brought together to make witness statements.

Anthony was shot by Greater Manchester Police as part of Operation Shire in 2012. Several officers who were involved gave evidence last week, including Armed Firearms Officers (AFOs) granted anonymity as X9, U9, U2 and G6.

They confirmed that the witness statements made six days after the shooting were a "collective enterprise".

It was to make sure that

all the statements had the same basic information by going through it with a flipchart. U9 agreed that this was "my interpretation of what was happening".

U9 further told the inquiry that he didn't think it was usual for everyone to get together and make their statements at the same time in the same room.

When asked why it was done in this case, U9 said he thought someone mentioned it was trying to stop collusion "or any form of that".

Asked who gave the instruction for all the AFOs to make their witness statements together,

X9 told the inquiry "I believe it was from our—a legal representative".

The AFOs agreed that some of the information they were given to write their witness statements was inaccurate—including the registration number of the car Anthony was in.

The inquiry was told that the AFOs did not really know who had made the "decision that it would be a collective statement writing process".

Asked if they felt uncomfortable with the decision, U2 told the inquiry that "it just felt unnecessary" but that "it felt appropriate and above board".

The inquiry continues.

CINEMA WORKERS

Picturehouse pickets want a more action-filled sequel

by ALISTAIR FARROW

THREE Picturehouse cinemas in London were shut down again on Friday of last week in the latest strike for demands including the Living Wage.

Workers picketed the Brixton, Central and Hackney cinemas between 5pm and 8pm.

One union official told Socialist Worker this was because of legal threats from lawyers for Picturehouse's parent company, Cineworld.

Pickets were limited to six people, with more workers standing away from the line. This is not a legal requirement.

Bectu union rep Andrea told Socialist Worker, "Everything is against us—the government are trying to undermine strikes."

Workers from the Ritzy cinema marched through Brixton.

Fewer sites were out than in the previous walkout.

But more strikes could take place on April and May involving all the sites with live ballots.

That includes the Duke of York in Brighton and the East Dulwich Picturehouse in London after a resounding



Strikers in central London

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

ballot result last week.

Strikers told Socialist Worker how they want to push the dispute forward.

Ritzy rep Holly said, "Everyone's excited at the moment because whenever a new site joins the dispute it's a great feeling—we're growing stronger."

At the central London site, Niall said, "Rather than just doing one day we should do concentrated strikes, maybe three or five days at a time or even a whole week."

"If we just take one day then management can move the rotas around because we have to give two weeks notice. If we went out for a week they wouldn't be able to do that."

The union would do better to look to the boldness of its members rather than the caution of its lawyers.

BENEFITS



Protesters remembered the dead

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

Killer sanctions slammed

PROTESTERS MARCHED to the Department for Work and Pensions from Parliament Square in London on Thursday of last week, in a day of action against benefit sanctions.

Speakers read out the names of people who have died after their benefits were cut off. They named MPs who had voted to cut benefits—and chanted "murderer".

There were protests outside scores of job centres across Britain. In Southampton there was a "funeral of Daniel

Blake", referring to the victim of benefit cuts in the Ken Loach film.

The protests were called by the community membership section of the Unite union and supported by the PCS union.

Sanctions see claimants' income cut off for weeks over minor breaches of harsh rules. They have become much more widely used under the Tories—with 8 million sanctions imposed on 3 million people since 2010.

●Longer at bit.ly/2oBiTuP

HOUSING

ACTIVISTS HELD a protest in Parliament Square last Saturday against the housing benefit cut for people aged between 18 and 21.

It could make 10,000 people homeless. The cut assumes young people can

stay with family. But many can't—such as LGBT+ people who face homophobia.

"We were affronted by the change in the law," said campaigner Ed. "There are any number of reasons why people can't go home."

EDUCATION

Walkouts can teach councillors a lesson

by SADIE ROBINSON

THREE GROUPS of school workers in London struck against cuts last week.

NUT union members at Forest Hill School in Lewisham, south east London, held a 48-hour strike from last Wednesday.

NUT members at Parkwood Primary School and the Inclusion and Specialist Support Team (ISST) in Hackney, east London, struck last Thursday.

Labour-run Hackney council wants to slash the Early Support Team at the ISST, which supports children with disabilities and special educational needs.

Diagnosed

Striker Lydia told Socialist Worker, "We identify children with special educational needs in nurseries and playgroups.

"If our service is cut, children will arrive at primary school without support."

At the ISST, workers in the Unison union refused to cross the picket line.

Teachers plan more walkouts in the summer term.

Parents and children joined the pickets at Forest Hill School.

Teachers are battling



HACKNEY NUT pickets, which Unison union colleagues refused to cross

PICTURE: HENRY FOWLER

plans to slash £1.3 billion. Lewisham's Labour council is pushing through the cuts, but six Labour councillors have signed a petition against them.

The school has a deficit yet pays nearly £1 million a year on a private finance initiative contract.

Striker Roisin said, "You can't cut without hurting students, but students shouldn't have to pay for the mistakes of the past."

Parents, strikers and children held a vibrant demonstration last Thursday.

They delivered their petition to mayor Sir Steve

Bullock at Lewisham Town Hall in Catford.

The NUT plans strikes on 19, 25 and 26 April.

Thanks to Andrew Smith

● Send messages of support to membsec@lewisham.nut.org.uk

For longer reports go to

bit.ly/2nvoYYO and

bit.ly/2oPC3wm

UNIVERSITIES ROUND UP

Lecturers defend union

UCU UNION members at the University of Brighton walked out from 1pm last Friday.

The half-day strike was the first walkout in a dispute over redundancies and attacks on conditions.

Bosses have also said they will choose which issues they will negotiate with the UCU.

This move would effectively derecognise the union.

Workers have also begun a work to rule.

They plan a two-day strike on 26 and 27 April and escalating action after that.

● Messages of support to m.abel@brighton.ac.uk

■ **TRADE UNIONISTS** at the University of Liverpool are demanding bosses reinstate longstanding UCU union rep Dawn Holdman.

Dawn, who is the UCU equalities officer, was made compulsorily redundant in a restructure just before Christmas.

The union believes Dawn has been victimised because of her trade union activities.

The union is asking trade unionists to write to vice chancellor Lindsey Sergeant to complain.

● Complain to the vice chancellor at lindsey.sergeant@liverpool.ac.uk

DISTRIBUTION WORKERS

Fury against Philip Green on warehouse picket line

WORKERS AT distribution firm DHL's warehouse in Solihull near Birmingham struck on Friday and Sunday of last week.

The walkouts were part of a long-running fight by the GMB union members for the Living Wage of £8.45 an hour.

DHL runs the warehouse for disgraced billionaire Sir Philip Green's Arcadia retail group.

While workers are struggling to make ends meet Lady Tina Green, Sir Philip's wife, splashed out £27,000 on a new handbag last year.

"That handbag costs more than two people's annual wage," one worker told Socialist Worker.

"Philip Green's got superyachts, private jets, but he can't afford to give us a pay rise."

Management have refused to back down, claiming that there is not enough money

to increase pay.

The worker said, "They've been telling us that we're doing them a favour by striking because they don't have to pay us."

"But it's actually costing them more because they have to bring in agency workers and managers from other sites."

Workers remain undaunted by management threats.

Another worker added, "We'll be going on strike indefinitely unless something happens."

Workers plan to strike for one Friday and Sunday each month.

They are also demanding the GMB supports them more by increasing their hardship pay. This would enable them to take more hard-hitting, sustained action to win.

Trade unionists should get behind their fight.

● Send messages of support to dominic.hinks@gmb.org.uk

UNITE UNION ELECTION

Bluster and bitterness in leadership race

THE UNITE union general secretary election reached new depths of bitterness last week with complaints against each of the two senior officials standing.

Unite has threatened to report right wing West Midlands regional secretary Gerard Coyne to the Information Commissioner.

Labour has admitted improperly giving Coyne contact details from its membership lists, allowing him to phone potential voters.

But incumbent Len McCluskey is also in hot water.

His campaign emailed members in branches that had not nominated him telling them they had.

This includes branches that actually nominated

left wing, rank and file challenger Ian Allinson—and "defunct" branches that no longer meet.

Right wing Labour MP John Spellar complained to the Trade Union Certification Officer that 178 of the branches that nominated McCluskey "may not be bona fide".

Unseat

Spellar, a former EETPU union official, can give no lessons on democracy. His backing for Coyne is part of the Labour right's drive to unseat twice-elected party leader Jeremy Corbyn.

Unite responded with a threat to report Spellar to the Information Commissioner.

The one row of substance last week, about the 2013

Falkirk row, showed how little either McCluskey's leadership or Coyne have to offer.

Smears about Unite's role in Labour's candidate selection were used by Grangemouth oil refinery bosses during the course of their attacks.

Coyne blamed McCluskey for "messaging about" in politics.

But Unite official Pat Rafferty said Unite was blameless—despite its failure to lead a fight back.

Socialist Worker calls for a vote for Ian Allinson.

Coyne would be a big step backwards—but McCluskey's leadership isn't delivering the action that's needed.

● The election runs until 28 April. Go to ian4unite.org

NUCLEAR WORKERS

WORKERS AT the Faslane and Coulport naval bases are continuing industrial action after talks between their Unite union and contractor Babcock Marine concluded without resolution last week.

The Unite members at the bases on the Clyde in Scotland are taking action short of a strike and staggered strikes. They accuse Babcock of trying to undermine the union.

Faslane is home of Britain's Trident fleet of nuclear-armed submarines.

The dispute comes alongside a series of strikes over pensions at the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) in Berkshire where Trident missiles are developed and maintained.

Workers fighting their bosses in the military sector deserve support as much as workers elsewhere.

But the resources and labour squandered on deadly weapons should be put to much better use.

CABIN CREW

Sky-high vote for BA strike

BRITISH Airways (BA) "mixed fleet" cabin crew have voted resoundingly to strike in a second ballot.

Some 91 percent backed strikes on a turnout of 69 percent.

The rebalot extends their mandate to strike and broadens their demands to include the return of bonuses docked to punish strikers.

It could have meant striking over Easter, one of BA's busiest periods. But Unite postponed calling strikes, saying it was making "progress" in talks.

In another ballot Unite sought to convince members of BA's "worldwide fleet" to waive the "good faith clause" in their contracts.

This commits them to demanding a pay rise of their

own if mixed fleet wins one.

Unite argued waiving it would be an "act of solidarity" because it would make it easier for BA to settle the mixed fleet dispute.

But members at the worldwide fleet voted to keep the clause.

This isn't necessarily bad news for mixed fleet. The workers' weakness is that they only represent a minority of BA's crew.

A better way to demand solidarity from other fleets would be to call them out in action too, adding to the pressure on BA.

The mixed fleet workers have fought heroically, but the long delay since their last action risks seeing them sold short.

WALKOUT OVER SAFETY THREAT

by RAYMIE KIERNAN

RMT UNION members on Northern, Southern and Merseyrail were set for a coordinated strike this Saturday.

The action is against the removal of guards from trains—known as Driver Only Operation (DOO)—which makes travel less safe and hits jobs.

The strikes, particularly the one on Merseyside on Grand National day, will hit hard.

And Aslef union drivers this week rejected their leadership's second shoddy deal with Southern bosses by 52 percent.

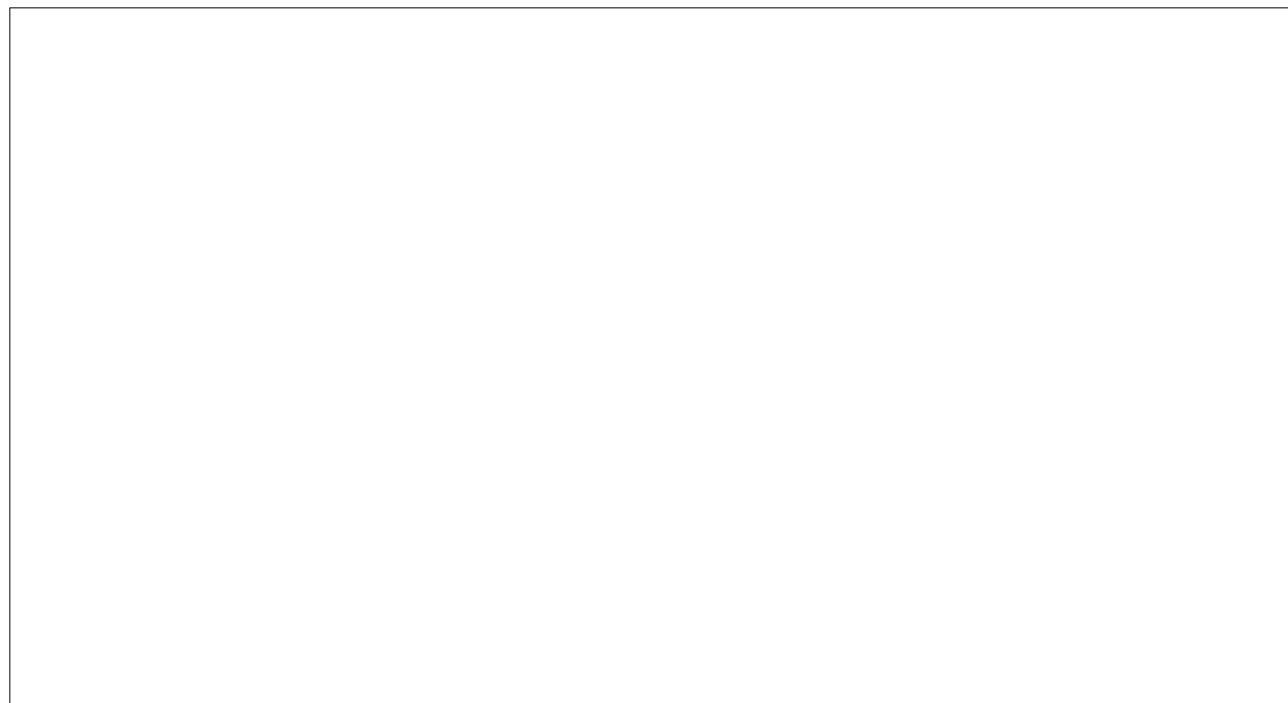
The deal would have accepted the extension of DOO.

Restart

Southern driver Martin told Socialist Worker, "There is a push among the membership to restart industrial action. We need to resume action now."

Two stories last week underlined why Tories can't be trusted with the railways.

First, a leaked letter from a senior Network Rail official



NETWORK RAIL has cancelled work to upgrade tracks in order to save cash—putting safety at risk

revealed Tory funding cuts mean "there is simply not enough money left" in current budgets to do vital rail track maintenance.

The renewal of crucial ballast—the thick gravel

that helps to constrain tracks under heavy traffic and drain water—has been cut on several routes.

The letter predicted "a tough couple of years for the whole industry" and a heavy

cost for workers employed by firms carrying out work for Network Rail.

The RMT said 1,000 jobs could be threatened.

The Tories already want to "devolve" responsibility

for track renewals to the rail fat cats. They hope to turn Network Rail, the public body in charge, into "a network of local businesses".

The second story is linked to the first. Transport

minister Chris Grayling is pushing further privatisation.

The award of the next South West Trains franchise last week was the first under Grayling's new plan.

First MTR won the franchise—and its first act was to dump £200 million worth of new trains and order new ones.

Carriages

Newly-refurbished carriages, which can only be used on southern England's rail system, are destined to sit on sidings indefinitely.

The rolling stock firms that own the fleet (see pages 10&11) will benefit. Yet passengers will pick up the tab through fare rises.

The move could mean that First MTR intends to extend DOO and is ordering more trains fitted for that purpose.

Ramming through DOO puts safety at risk.

That's why everyone must get behind the strikes on Saturday.

On other pages...

The fat cat controllers who stole the railways >>>Pages 10&11

HEALTH SERVICE

Thousands march in Leeds to oppose NHS cuts, closures and privatisation

by ELEANOR CLAXTON-MAYER

UP TO 5,000 people marched through Leeds last Saturday to say "Save our NHS" and oppose Tory cuts and privatisation in the health service.

The protest was organised by a number of groups including Keep Our NHS Public.

There was an upbeat atmosphere as loud chants of "Whose NHS? Our NHS!" rang out in the streets. People applauded as protesters marched through the city, with many joining in.

Health workers and



Part of the protest in Leeds last Saturday

PICTURE: NEIL TERRY

trade unionists from the Unison, GMB and Unite unions were on the march with their banners and flags.

Andy, a Unison regional officer for health in north Lincolnshire, said there was "a great atmosphere and there are many trade unionists here".

He said, "The NHS is being set up to fail so that they can privatise it."

Teacher Emma agreed. "In education, privatisation is coming in too," she told Socialist Worker.

"We have to stand up for what we believe in."

Cuts to funding are

putting growing pressures on NHS staff.

Leeds Labour Party councillor Sharon Hamilton told Socialist Worker, "This issue touches everyone—we have to keep funding the NHS and we have to fight for it."

People from many different campaigns from Leeds, Sheffield, Bradford and other areas mobilised for the march.

Zahra Satti, a 14 year old student studying health and social care in Bradford, said, "It's a really good turnout."

"It's really important to raise awareness about the attacks on the NHS".

Leeds Stand Up to Racism (SUTR) had a young and lively contingent chanting, "Migrants built the NHS."

Student Miryam said, "People recognise there is scapegoating going on with the cuts to the NHS, but without migrants there wouldn't be an NHS."

The cuts are putting people's lives in danger. The government is trying to divide people with racism to push through privatisation.

But the thousands marching in Leeds were a good antidote to that.

The turnout on the march shows the potential to build mass resistance.